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Essays, Moral and Political,

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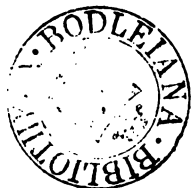
ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. LL.D.

POET LAUREATE, &c.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED:

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



HERE SHALT THOU HAVE THE SERVICE OF MY PEN,
THE TONGUE OF MY BEST THOUGHTS.

DANIEL.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCCXXXII.

281.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
ESSAY I.	
On Sir Francis Burdett's Motion for Parliamentary Reform; . . On the conduct of the War; . . and on the cry of the Whigs for Peace, 1810	3
ESSAY II.	
Army and Navy Reforms, 1810	29
ESSAY III.	
On the Economical Reformers, 1811	51
ESSAY IV.	
On the state of the Poor, the principle of Mr. Malthus's Essay on Population, and the Manufacturing System, 1812	75
ESSAY V.	
On the state of the Poor, and the means pursued by the Society for bettering their condition, 1816	159
ESSAY VI.	
On the Accounts of England by Foreign Travellers, and the state of Public Opinion, 1816	251
ESSAY VII.	
On the state of Public Opinion, and the Political Reformers, 1816	3

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THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

LONDON:
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2. The second part of the document focuses on the implementation of the proposed changes. It details the steps involved in the transition process, from the initial planning phase to the final execution. This section also addresses the potential challenges and risks associated with the changes, providing strategies to mitigate them.

3. The third part of the document discusses the impact of the changes on the organization's overall performance. It presents data and analysis showing the positive effects of the changes, such as increased efficiency and cost savings. This section also highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the changes continue to deliver the desired results.

4. The fourth part of the document provides a summary of the key findings and conclusions. It reiterates the importance of the changes and the need for continued commitment and support from all stakeholders. This section also offers recommendations for future actions and improvements.

5. The fifth part of the document is a conclusion, summarizing the main points of the document and expressing the author's confidence in the success of the proposed changes. It also expresses gratitude to the stakeholders who have supported the process throughout the document's development.

TO

SIR ROBERT HARRY INGLIS, BART.

&c. &c. &c.

My dear Sir Robert,

IT is both with pride and pleasure that I inscribe these Essays to you, as a public mark of respect, and a testimony of private regard ; for if there be anything on which we may be allowed to pride ourselves, it is upon that from whence one of our greatest pleasures is derived, ... the friendship of the wise and the good.

In revising them for republication, there were few opinions which I have found reason to modify, and none to retract. Had I indeed treated of political subjects with reference only to their temporary importance, and the interests and passions of the passing day, I should not have deemed them worthy of preservation, still less of being dedicated to you.

You know how little my disposition inclines me toward public life, and that these are not pursuits in which I ever should have engaged willingly. But woe to him who remains inactive when it becomes his duty to exert himself! The part which I have taken has obtained for me, and in large measure, the esteem and good will of those by whom it is a comfort as well as an honour to be approved; and, on the other hand, the obloquy of men whose declared enmity is sufficient proof that the approbation which I desired has been deserved, ‘*maximum*’ ‘*namque est bonitatis argumentum malis ignavisque hominibus displicere.*’

Most of these papers were written in times of public excitement, and in such a time they are now republished; for in this sense of the word I am truly a time-server. Never within our memory have the aspects appeared so threatening as at present. No foresight can avail against fatuity, and the desperate councils of demented men: but even the sceptical Bayle has remarked that in such emergencies there is a surer hope than any that rests upon

human wisdom : *j'entens*, he says, *que malgré tout ce que les hommes font de très-propre à ruiner une chose, il y a néanmoins une Providence supérieure qui la fait durer.* If he could thus express himself, with how much greater reason may we trust that the British Constitution, however it may be threatened and betrayed, will yet be preserved to us in mercy ! We who know in WHOM we believe, and on *what* our principles are established, shall neither lose heart nor hope. In those principles too we have an assurance that for the part which we have taken, you in the front of the contest, and I in my retirement, we can never justly be reproached by others, nor have cause to reproach ourselves, be the issue what it may.

Accept then as a token and a memorial of friendship these Essays, wherein, during the course of two and twenty years I have pleaded against the growing errors of the times ; not more earnestly opposing evil designs, and perilous experiments upon our social system,

than urging the necessity of those efficient measures, and those only real and radical reforms, by which alone it can be supported.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Keswick, 15 Sept. 1831.

ESSAY I.

**ON SIR FRANCIS BURDETT'S MOTION FOR
PARLIAMENTARY REFORM;**

ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR;

A

AND ON

THE CRY OF THE WHIGS FOR PEACE.

1810.

B

ESSAY I.

ON SIR FRANCIS BURDETT'S MOTION FOR PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, in his speech upon the Walcheren Expedition, argued that Parliamentary Reform, through the want of which he affirmed that miserable expedition had arisen, was the one thing needful for the salvation of the country. 'Without it,' he said, . . 'without a change of system, . . without
' reverting to the principles of the constitution,
' with the decline of which the country had de-
' clined, no permanent good could be expected.
' If we wished to be rescued from our present
' perilous situation, we must have reform, . . reform
' which would revive and re-establish the ancient
' fundamental principles of our constitution. Un-
' less this was obtained, neither himself nor the
' country would be satisfied. From the folly of
' not demanding this arose all our evils. All our
' calamities, all our disgraces, were derived from
' the want of a fair and equal representation. To
' that, and that alone, the people ought to look ;
' it would be folly to expect relief from any other
' cause. If this were obtained, they would no
' longer see ministerial weakness working on
' abandoned prostitution. This was their only
' avenue of escape from ruin, imminent ruin.'

His own scheme for renovating the constitution he had on a former occasion thus specified:

‘ Having taken the laws and the constitution for my guide, in preparing the measure I have to propose, I examined attentively all those plans for carrying the same principle into execution, which have at different times been proposed; and having avoided all those intricacies which I considered as so many impediments in the way, have reduced it to a plain and simple form, the express image of the constitution itself.—My plan consists in a very few and very simple regulations.

‘ That freeholders, householders, and others, subject to direct taxation in support of the poor, the church, and the state, be required to elect members to serve in Parliament.

‘ That each county be subdivided according to its taxed male population, and each subdivision required to elect one representative.

‘ That the votes be taken in each parish by the parish officers; and all elections finished in one and the same day.

‘ That the parish officers make the returns to the Sheriff's Court, to be held for that purpose at stated periods.

‘ And that Parliaments be brought back to a constitutional duration.

‘ Under the operation of this reform, it would be attended with much less difficulty to return a whole Parliament, than to settle a dispute at a vestry about a parish pauper. Those disgraceful practices, which now attend even county elections, would be put a stop to. No bribery, perjury, drunkenness, nor riot; no opportunity for mock patriotism;—no leading attornies galloping

‘ about the country, lying, cheating, and stirring
‘ up the worst passions among the worst people ;
‘ —no ill blood engendered between friends and
‘ relations, setting families at variance, and mak-
‘ ing each county a perpetual depository of elec-
‘ tion feuds and quarrels. No demagoguing !
‘ —If I *am* a demagogue, I am as complete a
‘ *felo de se* as can well be imagined ; this puts an
‘ end to the occupation.—No qualifications nor
‘ disqualifications ; no invidious exclusions by
‘ reason of any office, from the highest to the
‘ lowest, either in the elector or the elected ; no
‘ variable, fantastical, litigious, rights of voting ;
‘ no possibility of false votes ; no treating, no
‘ carrying out voters, no charges of any kind,
‘ no expense, legal or illegal, no contested
‘ elections. . . The people would have a choice with-
‘ out a contest, instead of a contest without a
‘ choice. No sham remedies worse than the
‘ disease pretended to be cured ; no Grenville
‘ act ! Here I speak feelingly ; I have undergone
‘ this *remedy*. It is the remedy of a toad under
‘ a harrow. Under the operation of that act, I
‘ have suffered a greater pecuniary penalty than
‘ any which the law would have inflicted for any
‘ crime I could have committed : this *remedy* is a
‘ luxury a man must be very rich indeed to in-
‘ dulse himself in. I could not afford it a second
‘ time, and preferred abandoning my seat after
‘ having been returned, to undergoing another
‘ operation of the Grenville act. One great object
‘ I have in view is to relieve other gentlemen from
‘ the like benefits, by preventing the necessity of
‘ having recourse to *such remedies* in future, . . .
‘ getting rid of all disputes and contested elect

‘ This good consequence will result from the
‘ adoption of this plan, besides preventing endless
‘ litigation, ruinous expense, perjury, ill blood, and
‘ periodical uproar and confusion, this House will
‘ be saved one-third of its time in election com-
‘ mittees ; and the Statute Book will be relieved
‘ from the shameful burden of one hundred and
‘ thirteen confused and intricate laws, all pitiful
‘ substitutes for the constitution. It must also
‘ give rise to other important results : those who
‘ complain of popular clamour, of persons allying
‘ themselves with the people against the sentiments
‘ and decisions of this House, would cease to have
‘ any room for complaint.

‘ Though I am not one of those who would
‘ apply a sponge to the debt of the nation, yet am
‘ I firmly persuaded, that a reformed House of
‘ Commons would introduce such a system of
‘ economy, both in the collection and expenditure
‘ of the public revenue, as would give instant ease
‘ to the subject, and finally, and that at no very
‘ distant period, by a due application of national
‘ resources to national objects, *and to them alone*,
‘ free the people from that enormous load of debt,
‘ and consequent taxation, under which the nation
‘ is weighed down.’

In introducing this motion Sir Francis observed that, ‘ the remedy which he proposes is simple, and
‘ perfectly practicable ; it is consistent with the
‘ habits and interests of the people, and in unison
‘ with the laws and constitution of the country ; it
‘ is *the Constitution itself*.—Let others,’ said he,
‘ deal in whimsical speculations, in undefined mys-
‘ terious notions of a constitution, which eludes the
‘ grasp, and soars above the conception of ordinary

‘ minds ; let them amuse themselves with intricate theories and fine-spun metaphysics ; I shall hold fast by that plain and substantial constitution, adapted to the contemplation of common understandings, *to be found in the Statute Book, and recognized by the Common Law of the Land.*’

This remedy, then, according to Sir Francis Burdett, is the Constitution itself, . . . that plain and substantial Constitution which he says is found in the Statute Book, and recognized by the Common Law of the Land. . . Sir Francis should have referred to the Statute Book, . . . the year, and the reign, and the volume, and the page.

The constitution is an excellent war-cry for a party. . . ‘ Nothing but the Constitution ! ’ . . . But what do they, who use this cry, mean by the Constitution which they call for ? For there is not a greater difference between the same individual, in the days of his childhood, of his youth, manhood, maturity, and old age, than in the system of the English government at different periods of its history. At what age would these renovating politicians choose to have it come out of Medea’s kettle, if they could succeed in dismembering it for the experiment ? Would they take it at the standard of our great Alfred’s time, with its appendages of slavery and villanage, and a police as inquisitorial as that of Japan ? Would they have the Plantagenet or the Tudor constitution, under which parliaments were convoked only to grant money, and to legalize any caprice or cruelty of the ruling faction, or the reigning monarch ? If neither the feudal nor the Tudor constitution will satisfy them, as little can they look for a precedent to the subsequent age, when it was put to the decision of a

whether we should live under a despotism or a commonwealth. To come nearer our own times, would they be content with it as it existed when the publication of the debates was not permitted?

The fact is, that the Constitution is *not* to be found in the Statute Book: . . we have no nine-and-thirty articles of state. The history of our government is like that of our common law. A system has grown up among us unlike that of our ancestors, or of any other people; and that system, such as it is, has made us the prosperous, the powerful, the free, . . would that it might be added, . . the *happy* people that we are! Better systems, no doubt, are conceivable . . for better men. The theory of a pure republic is far more delightful to the imagination: it is to our constitution as a sun-dial to a time-piece, simpler, surer, and liable to no derangement . . if the sun did but always shine. When society shall be so far advanced in its progress that all men live in the light of reason, then they may have the dial; meantime, upon any pretext that it may require cleaning or repairing, let us beware into whose hands we trust the time-piece! A fair examination of the ends which the radical reformers profess to aim at, and of the means whereby they would attain them, will prove that neither probable nor possible good can arise from the measures which they propose. The professed object is to diminish the public expenditure and the public burdens, by lessening the influence of government in elections and in Parliament, and thereby increasing the influence of public opinion. With this their arguments begin; upon this their persuasions are founded; and in this the benefits which they propose to us so liberally and confidently end.

In every plan of political reform which has yet been brought forward, the House of Commons has been considered as purely a legislative body; the material fact being overlooked, that there is always a party in that House whose business it is to vilify and harass the ministry, and to impede and thwart all their measures. It is true, that statutes have been framed to prevent the crown from exerting any influence at elections; but there existed at that time nothing like that regular and organized system of opposition, which, in the words of Jonathan Boucher*, ‘has been imperceptibly ‘suffered so to attach and fasten itself to our ‘constitution as almost to become a part of it, . . ‘yet surely no otherwise a part of it, than as that ‘congeries of shell-fish called barnacles, which, ‘adhering to the bottom of a ship, always impede ‘and retard her course, and at length destroy her, ‘can be called a part of the ship.’ There are usually, as at present, four parties in the House of Commons†: of these, three are against the ministry. Now, unless there be something to weigh against this fearful odds, no ministry could stand three months; and in that case the govern-

* View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution, p. 149.

† The *Imm*, the *Oats*, Lord Sidmouth’s, and the Radical Reformers. It is always desirable to disencumber an argument of every thing superfluous, otherwise some farther divisions might have been specified. About ten members look to Mr. Canning as their leader; about four to Lord Castlereagh; the “*Saints*,” as they are called, are some halldown; and, besides these, there are the *Independents*, who are said, with some humour, always to vote against their friends. Their professed object is to steady the state vessel; but upon trials of strength, (that is, whenever votes are valuable,) the opposition invent a question which may include them, and then they act like shifting ballast in bad weather.—1810.

ment of England would be virtually dissolved. This must necessarily follow from any reform which should take away the influence of government. But with a reform upon the plan of Sir Francis, it is plain that the members for every place would be against the ministry, as is now the case with all those who represent places populous in voters ; there then would be an end of government. The direct road to anarchy is by this way of Parliamentary Reform.

For the influence of government cannot be lessened without destroying government, even if the tendency of the proposed alteration were not to fill the House of Commons with men of a different stamp and character to those of whom it has hitherto been composed*. But the danger will appear far more imminent, when it is considered what would be the consequence of making all elections popular, in the literal sense of the word. Sir Francis's plan for limiting the duration to one day, and taking the votes in the separate parishes, might probably prevent riots, and would at least render them less frequent and less dangerous ; but what other evil would it lessen ? The season of license which was taken from the poll would be added to the canvass ; inflammatory discourses, instead of being addressed from the hustings, would be diffused more widely and efficaciously by handbills ; and everywhere the successful candidate would be the man who flattered the mob most effectually. Bribery is a light evil

* At present (1810) the House contains about 250 country gentlemen, 120 courtiers and government votes, 90 merchants, manufacturers, and bankers, 50 bred to the law, 60 to the army, and 17 to the navy. The rest are non-descripts.

when compared to the arts of encouraging disaffection in the populace, exciting their mutinous feelings, and stirring them to clamour for unattainable benefits. They who propose oaths for the elected, that no money or influence has been used in obtaining their election, should invent an oath also that there has been none of this fouler corruption. . . no making the people drunk with sedition, . . no bribing them with lying promises : for this would be the currency if all elections were made popular, and the influence of wealth and power destroyed. It is easy to see who would be the successful candidates at such elections : . . not men whose names and families are older in the country than the old oaks upon their estates, and who possess the habitual and hereditary respect and confidence of all around them ; . . not they who have made their own fortunes, and, with an honourable ambition, are desirous of serving and supporting, as best they can, the country and the government in which and under which they have prospered ; . . not the soldier and the sailor, who, having upheld the honour of England abroad, would fain in the evening of life sustain her interests at home ; . . not the lawyer who is at the head of his profession ; . . not the man of learning, the financier, the statesman, and the philosopher : . . but hotheaded and presumptuous youth ; the old, to whom years have brought no knowledge ; the adventurer ; the gambler, who would sport with the fortunes of his country as lightly as he sets his own upon the die ; the unsuccessful, the disappointed, and the desperate. These would be the successful candidates ; these would be the popular leaders ; and they would be followed by

'every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented *.' It is even now contended for by many, that members ought not to use their own judgement, but to vote as instructed by their constituents. Make all elections popular, and the constituents will have no need to exact a pledge to this effect, so ready will they who court their favour be to offer it! Such a result is the natural and inevitable consequence of a direct unfiltered representation in our state of half knowledge; the power would then be as effectually in the hands of the people as it was at Athens: how that people exercised their power history hath told us; and, ill as they exercised it, oh what a fearful difference is there between the Athenian people and the British populace! The rashness and inconsistency which are inseparable from popular councils would bring on disaster after disaster; public men would be sent to the block upon every national misfortune, . . . for it is the nature of all tyrannies, whether of the one or the many, to be cruel; and England would be ruined as Carthage was, because the mob there were consulted when the Senate was not unanimous. The end of these evils would be a military despotism, which is the consummation of all evils; . . . if indeed we escaped the yoke of Buonaparte, that bloody and insatiable barbarian, whom there is this reason for supposing some among us would be ready to call in as their friend . . . that they have taken especial care never to render him their enemy.

Such would be the consequence of making the government subordinate to public opinion. Pub-

* 1 Samuel, c. xxii. v. 2.

lic opinion has already attained in this country the utmost influence which is compatible with public safety; the permitted publication of the parliamentary debates, and the list of majorities which are now so sedulously given, are quite enough to insure careful and upright conduct in Parliament, even if the House of Commons were as permanent as the House of Peers. Not long since it was asserted in a newspaper, which is more useful to Buonaparte than his own Argus, (faction serving his purpose more effectually than open treason,) that the editors of all the newspapers in combination could overthrow the constitution. The boast was not much overstrained. But if the newspaper press is, in its present state, (as assuredly it is,) the best guardian of our liberties, its unbridled license, which is the despotism of public opinion, would soon lead to the destruction of all liberty, and England would have its Marats and its Heberts.

But no ill consequences can be apprehended from the alteration which Sir Francis has proposed in the manner of taking votes. This reform is not less easy than it is desirable; and will be effected when some candidate shall have fallen a victim to a brutal and infuriated populace. Murder has been attempted at such times, and preparations for it deliberately made; and greatly is it to be wished, that an alteration should be brought about before the necessity for it is evinced, as otherwise it surely will be, by some dreadful * event of

* After this essay was published, Sir Murray Maxwell was so severely injured by a stone thrown at him, among other missiles, as he was retiring from the hustings in Covent Garden, that the country, during many years, was deprived of the services of one of its best naval officers, in the prime of life. Had he been killed, some legislative

this kind. Regulations which would diminish, at least, the merciless consumption of post-horses, the drunkenness and the rioting at contested elections, might be proposed in Parliament, as measures of pure utility, in which all parties (mere demagogues alone excepted) are interested alike. The diminution of expense would, perhaps, not be so considerable as may at first appear, because there would still remain an ample field for electioneering roguery, and more legal checks would be required: but the other advantages are sufficiently great to render an alteration desirable, from which no evil in any way can be apprehended.

If any real reform in the representation be practicable, it is either by electing the electors, and thus filtering them through successive processes, after the manner of the Spanish Cortes;—(and for a pure legislative body, in which there is no party embodied against the government, this mode is unexceptionable:) or, it might be better effected among us by raising the value of a freehold to what it originally was, and thus taking away votes from the ignorant, who cannot possibly know how to use them. A man ought well to have studied history before he is fit for any direct share in national policy; and certainly his constituents should be within reach of reading history if they please. All the errors which prevailed in this country respecting the French revolution pro-

measure, no doubt, would have been taken for preventing the possibility of such outrages at any election in future. The outrage has not been without its effect, but of a different kind. For Sir Murray Maxwell was the last naval candidate for Westminster; and thenceforth that city has been delivered over to pure democracy, although it is the seat of a government whose influence in all elections is the unfailing topic of opposition candidates!—1830.

ceeded from ignorance: no man who was acquainted with the history of the *Fronde* could have expected any happy result from a révolution in France, the French being what they were; no man who had studied Machiavelli could have committed the blunders which were committed in the conduct of the anti-jacobin war. But wealth of some kind, by whatever legal criterion to be indicated, is necessary to education and sound thought on policy, . . . a science which, of all others, tempts men to think it easy, while it is in reality the most difficult of all.

The real evil of our representation lies, not in the influence of the Treasury, but in the power of a few great land-holders, . . . in that power which enables one of these political behemoths to demand for himself an office, or at least to exercise an influence in the government, though he should have no pretensions to it on the score of abilities or character. This is a power which no oath can reach, and which Mr. Curwen's bill renders more monstrous, by destroying, or attempting to destroy, all that counterbalanced it. An evil it is, and a great evil; but it is one which the increasing wealth of the country must continually diminish. All prosperous counties have been gradually emancipating themselves. In Lancashire, property is so split through the evident advantage of selling land in small lots, whereby it fetches at least a double price, that the freeholders are augmented from 8,000 to 28,000: in Yorkshire, the increase has been from 10,000 to 25,000. Even Norfolk, which boasts of only agricultural improvement, while its manufactures have declined*, has more than doubled

* Since the peace of 1815 the Norwich manufactures have revived and prospered.

its freeholders. No plan of reform that has been suggested would touch this evil, except the wild one of universal suffrage, which would be proclaiming anarchy at once. It is not, however, of such magnitude, but that it may safely be left to its natural decay.

Mr. Whitbread, in speaking upon this subject, spake with respect of the nominated members, . . . a pretty considerable number happening to be on his own side of the house. Concerning the sale of seats, he argued with less candour and less justice. 'The man,' he said, 'who was returned by his money could have little connection with public feeling. With his constituents he could never come in contact: he could have no bias to comply with their opinions; perhaps he had never seen them. He felt and acted as the representative of his 5000*l.*; and when he was versed in the system of ministerial management, he would not long remain backward in pursuing that course which he observed followed by so many to their own private advantage.' If Mr. Whitbread had glanced upon some of the very men who were prepared to give their votes with him upon the subject then in discussion, he would have seen this sweeping and illiberal condemnation at once disproved. But unless he were prepared to maintain that all men are naturally corrupt in the literal as well as theological sense of the phrase; that there is a species of political original sin, and that the only means of regeneration is by a popular election; . . . unless this were his meaning, his arguments stand self-confuted: for they amount to nothing more than this, . . . that the man who owes his seat not to popular favour, nor to the nomination of

one of our great land-leviathans, but has made a direct purchase of it, becomes thereby, to all intents and purposes, an independent member ; . . a position which Mr. Windham maintained in the debates upon Mr. Curwen's bill, with his usual ability.

The main evil of our government is not in the state of the representation, but in the want of an efficient head. In time of war, a cabinet, like an aulic council, seems to insure vacillation and imbecility : it proceeds by a system of concessions and compromises, which renders it incapable of anything vigorous or decisive. We want a responsible prime minister, to whom all the departments of state should be subordinate. There is no change of constitution in an alteration of this kind ; for the constitution knows as little of a cabinet as of a premier : it is sufficient that it attaches responsibility to the King's advisers. The nature of our government indeed, altogether, is better adapted for a state of peace than for war ; in war the existence of a regular opposition becomes almost as injurious to the nation and to the national character, as it at other times may occasionally be beneficial. It is indeed a strange anomaly in politics, that there should exist in the legislature of any country a regular party, whose business it is to obstruct every measure of the government, and, by every possible means, render the administration odious and contemptible to the people ; . . a party who, when we go to war, tell the world we are in the wrong ; and when we are engaged in it, declaim upon our dilapidated resources and intolerable burdens, the irresistible strength of the enemy, and the necessity of making peace with a

power which it is impossible for us to withstand. In England the real import of this language is understood ; but abroad it passes current ; . . it disheartens our allies ; and when Buonaparte would persuade the French that the conquest of Spain and Portugal is easy, and the ruin of England certain, his surest policy is to fill the *Moniteur* with the speeches of a party-leader, the cowardly sophistry of a party-critic, and the fallacies and falsehoods of an opposition paper.

For him who has the business of true reform, that is, who has the desire of benefiting his country and his kind, sincerely at heart, there is work enough in the world, be his temper and the nature of his talents what they may. Benevolence, however active, may find sufficient employment in those plans, so peculiarly honourable to England, which are at this time carrying on for bettering the condition of the poor, for preventing poverty and guilt by national education, for sowing the seeds of civilization in Africa, and for extending the blessings of Christianity to the degraded nations of the East, the brutalized tribes of Polynesia, the Tartar hordes, the Negroes, and the poor Hottentots, . . now subjects of our own government, the most inoffensive of men, and hitherto the most wickedly oppressed. If his ambition be to figure in Parliament as a political reformer, there also good is to be done, in which, let but practicable plans be brought forward, any ministry will be most ready to co-operate : the poor laws and the penal laws require revision, and means are still desired for preventing the necessity of pressing for the navy. Is it difficult to amend one of these things?

oh then be sure it is far more so to amend the system which includes them all! . . Should it be his humour to ferret out abuses? Let him look to the contractors, . . those, for instance, whose biscuit is known in the navy by the name of 'composition-cake,' over which their malediction is piously drank as a standing toast in the ward-room. Or let him examine into the state of the charitable foundations over the country, where the same number of poor persons are now maintained in the same manner as when the institutions were endowed centuries ago; and the increase of the rents, which in some places is twenty, fifty, even an hundred fold, is swallowed up by chaplains and trustees. But if he be indeed a patriot, in the genuine sense of that polluted name, . . if he has in him a deep, and dutiful, and enlightened love of the country in which it has been his happy privilege to be born, . . he will feel that in these times the paramount duty of an Englishman is, to exert himself in raising the spirit of his countrymen to the pitch of those days, when they won crowns and brought home captive kings. The one business of England is to abate the power of France; that power she must beat down, or fall herself; that power she will beat down, if she do but wisely and strenuously put forth her own mighty means.

A nation engaging in war without a deep conviction of the necessity of obtaining its object, must act more by chance than by foresight; difficulties which have not been foreseen are, when they arise, magnified into impossibilities; and they occasion either the sudden abandonment of an

enterprize lightly begun, or such a vacillation both in the cabinet and the field, that the opportunities of action are lost, and success becomes impossible. These few words comprise the history of all our military failures. A general want of information has always been complained of by the British army; countries have been found quite different from the notions entertained of them; the maps and plans in our possession have proved erroneous, and the disposition of the natives has disappointed our expectations. Now, information upon all these points is certainly and easily to be obtained, . . but not on the spur of the moment; it must be the work of foresight, and would not have been neglected, had the nation felt more strongly the importance of its wars by land. A more unaccountable, and far more mischievous cause of failure is, that in almost all our military expeditions, the force employed has been inadequate to the object proposed. It is no economy, says Captain Pasley, either of money or of lives, to make war by dribblets. We ought to deal in war by wholesale; fifties of thousands bring home princely returns to the enterprising merchant; the gains of the timid trader, even when he gains, are little in proportion to the little that he has risked upon the adventure; and by cautiously shifting his capital from one branch of commerce to another he sees bolder competitors outstrip him in all, and perhaps ruins himself at last from a fear of bankruptcy. Our system has usually been not to employ more men than are barely sufficient to match the enemy in the field, in those countries which we have designed to wrest from him, . . as if

it would be an unfair advantage to send more troops against him than he has assembled there in readiness for the game. Wherever he has not been able to pour in reinforcements and weigh us down by numbers, this has answered, . . . because with equal numbers, or even with numbers not greatly inferior, we always have beat the French, and, by God's blessing, shall continue to do so; but even then it is a wasteful policy, compelling us to fight and beat the enemy whom an additional force would have frightened into submission; . . . and for its ruinous consequences in other cases, it is needless to refer to examples which are still too fresh in remembrance.

This inadequacy of force has not indeed always occasioned that utter disgrace and destruction which might have been expected; because British troops are incomparably the best in the world. Witness the battle of Coruña, when the wreck of our soldiers, stiff and foundered with the fatigue of the cruelest march that ever broke up an army in Europe, . . . heart-broken with indignation and with suffering, . . . and having nothing in view from success, but an immediate and hurried embarkation, which would be published and proclaimed over the whole continent as a flight, . . . were permitted at last to turn upon their pursuers; in that miserable state they achieved for their country a victory at once the proudest and the most humiliating in her annals; a victory which, proving so incontestibly what they could do, served only to make the grief and the shame of England more poignant for what they had done! But if the utter destruction of the army was thus prevented, the ruinous consequences of half measures were

sufficiently exemplified in that lamentable campaign; and it was not the least evil arising from the inadequacy of the British force, that it gave a fair ostensible cause of despondency to Sir John Moore, who was already too prone to despond from the nature and habit of his mind, and who had learnt to think with exaggerated apprehensions both of the power and the skill of the French.

Peace with Buonaparte, or with France under any other ruler, while France possesses the extent of coast which is at present subject to it, it is folly, or insanity, or treason to advise. To carry on a defensive war would be to remain stationary in power, while our enemy was increasing in strength;..this also is demonstrably a certain road to ruin. We have at this time an efficient regular army of upwards of 250,000 men. What then, if we could lay this island alongside France, should prevent us from doing it as resolutely as ever Nelson brought an enemy's three-decker to close quarters,..and as confidently of success? What should deter us from meeting Buonaparte any where with equal numbers, casting the liberties of the world into the scale, and trusting to God, and our good cause, and our own right hands, for the triumphant issue? But no miracle is needed for enabling us to meet him. We are masters of the sea,..uncontrolled, undisputed, absolute lords of the whole ocean. It is in our power therefore to choose the vantage ground, and to attack the enemy wherever and whenever it may be most advantageous for us, with such a force as should ensure success, were there even no superiority of moral causes on our side, and if the

people whom we are to deliver were to remain passive spectators of the contest. With such opportunities, with such a force, with such means of augmenting, and such resources for supporting it, . . . knowing too what not even the most panic-stricken, nor the most besotted of the tyrant's admirers in this country, dare deny, that wherever our troops have been fairly tried against his invincibles, they have uniformly beaten them, . . . what is it that can have occasioned the absurd and mischievous feeling of dismay, which gives ear to any voice rather than the voice of hope, to any counsels rather than those of true patriotism, true courage, and true wisdom, . . . of honour and of duty?

The maxim which the despondents in and out of parliament are perpetually inculcating is, that we ought to *husband our resources*. By this it is meant that we ought to save our men and our money till we are actually invaded by the enemy. Now as to the policy of husbanding money with such a view, we have an illustrious exemplification of it in the Greeks of Constantinople, who hoarded up those treasures to be plundered by the invader, which they would not expend in carrying on the war against him. Our own history affords another such example in what befell the loyalists during the great rebellion; we have seen its effect upon the Dutch in our own time; and the equally wise policy of husbanding an army has been exhibited still more recently by Prussia. Prussia had an army of the 'best disciplined troops' in the world; they were the admiration of all Europe upon the parade, and they had once been the terror of Europe in the field. But the existing army had been

husbanded: the consequence was, that in the hour of trial they came to the field like raw militia-men opposed to veteran troops; and in a single day the Prussian monarchy was left at the mercy of a conqueror. The event of the battle of Jena might have been predicted with perfect certainty; for in military science, as in every other science, art, or trade, practice is essential to perfection. The pugilist improves both his skill and his muscular power by daily trials and exertions; the more he uses his arms, the more tremendous is the blow which he is able to deal with them; whereas the Hindoo devotee who sits with his hands before him in the same posture of devotion for weeks and months and years, *husbands* his muscles till he loses the use of them.

‘Oh woe to thee when doubt comes on!’ says a wild German writer; ‘it blows over thee like a wind from the North, and makes all thy joints to quake!’ Woe indeed will be to the British statesmen who doubt the strength of their cause and of their country, and stand in awe of the enemy with whom it is engaged! And woe will be to us, . . . and to Europe whose deliverance must come from us, . . . and to liberty and knowledge, and pure morals, and true religion, which with us (humanly speaking) must stand or fall, if the government of this mighty kingdom, in these momentous times, should be entrusted to men, as Wordsworth says of them

Who talk of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand!

We have been told of the dangers in which Lord Wellington and his army are placed; . . . this too in language which it is humiliating for an

Englishman to read as coming from an English press, . . language as base as the basest political cowardice could inspire, and as mischievous as the foulest treason could have dictated. But this is not the feeling of the British people ;

For we are the sons of the men
Who conquer'd on Cressy's plain,
And what our fathers did,
Their sons can do again.—M. B.

What if Buonaparte himself should again enter the Peninsula with his legion of honour, and his imperial guards, and his new army of the North to put in execution his old threat of driving the English into the sea? On the banks of the Tagus* we can assemble a British force numerous enough to engage with any that he can bring there, and we can supply it there with certainty and safety. Would to God that the contest was put upon such an issue! One effectual victory, . . one thorough success pursued to the destruction of an army which he commanded in person, . . and oh what a spirit would be kindled throughout groaning and humiliated Europe! We have not yet learnt to think highly enough of our own power. We must exalt ourselves if we would not be humbled by the enemy.

In such times, it is worse than folly to distract the attention of government by clamouring concerning imaginary grievances; and to excite discontent in the people is, as far as possible, to betray the country. Of what should we complain? Of the public burthens? It is the war by which they are chiefly occasioned; . . carry on that war vigorously to the end, the end will be triumphant,

* This part of the Essay was written while Massena was before the lines of Torres Vedras.

and then the burthens may be diminished ; conclude it by a precipitate peace, no diminution can be effected, and you deliver yourselves up to the enemy, . . to a tyrant whose little finger is heavier than the loins of any usurper that ever yet was sent as a curse among mankind. . . Is it of political grievances ? Under no possible or conceivable form of government could we enjoy more perfect individual liberty. An Englishman is as free in word and deed as in thought, subject to no other restriction than that which natural law requires, which is the rule of reason, that he use not his own freedom to the injury of another. And for political freedom, in what other age or country, since the beginning of the world, has it ever been so secured ? That any man of upright intentions might deliver his opinions plainly and freely upon all public measures, is a fact so notorious that it might seem superfluous to assert it. If at any time within our memory it has been otherwise, (as in truth it was during the Pitt and Grenville administration,) it must be remembered that revolutionary practices were at that time carried on ; and it ought not to be forgotten, that government could not have acted tyrannically unless the stream of opinion had been with it, and that for the acts of injustice which were then committed, the juries were at least as culpable as the crown-lawyers. Public opinion in those days outran the measures of government ; and in the riots at Birmingham we had a specimen of what is to be expected from its supremacy. For whether the fiend who bestrides it and spurs it on, have Jacobin or Anti-Jacobin written on his forehead, the many-headed Beast is the same.

ESSAY II.

ARMY AND NAVY REFORMS.

1810.

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DISCUSSIONS concerning abuses, real as well as pretended, in the navy and naval departments, have been brought forward in Parliament with that prejudice and disregard of truth which distinguish the radical reformers; their exaggerated statements obtained all the publicity that could be given them by that part of the press which is never negligent in performing its work of mischief; and thus they succeeded in engaging public attention, while the measures of real utility to the service which were proposed or effected by its true friends were unheeded, and scarcely heard of. Such are the regulations which Mr. Croker communicated to the House*, stating that, according to the old arrangement, when a seaman was permitted to procure a substitute, in order to quit the service himself, his only course was to apply to persons called crimps, who charged at the rate of 100 guineas for an able-bodied seaman, and 50 for a landsman; and who insisted, that the whole sum should be deposited at first. Months, and even years, therefore, elapsed before the substitute was found; and it often happened that the individual who paid his money sailed to a foreign station, or perhaps died, before the object was accomplished. Government, considering this a grievance which called for its interference, resolved

* May, 1811.

to put an end to the iniquitous trade of the crimps altogether. With this view, the Board of Admiralty determined that the man should be discharged the moment his discharge was paid for, at the rate of 80 guineas for an able-bodied seaman, and 40 for a landsman; instead of the fifty and the hundred, as charged by the crimps, under all the casualties of imposition and delay. The money thus received was carried to the fund for raising volunteer seamen, and all the objects of the arrangement were fully answered. Such, too, was the plan proposed by Lord Melville, that an adequate number of king's ships should without delay be prepared and held in readiness for the accommodation of such troops as it might be found expedient to embark in furtherance of the public service. This motion he introduced by a speech of sound reasoning and great ability. 'The great 'loss of lives,' he said, 'which our colonial 'conquests had cost at the commencement of the 'last war, had led him to observe that the mortality 'did not arise solely, nor perhaps principally, from 'their services in the field; and to believe that an 'improvement in the mode of conveying the troops, 'by affording them a more airy and comfortable 'accommodation during the passage to the West 'Indies, would tend greatly to their preservation. 'The then commander-in-chief of the troops upon 'that station was persuaded that every prospect 'of success from their operations depended more 'upon the care, attention, and comfort afforded 'to them on their passage, than upon any other 'circumstance whatever. These objects could 'best be attained by the use of armed troop-ships; 'and whether you consider the comfortable

‘accommodation which the officers and men enjoy
‘upon the voyage, in comparison with that which
‘they experience in common transports,—the
‘safety of the troops in case of separation,—the
‘comparatively few ships required for the con-
‘veyance of an army,—the expedition with which
‘it may be transported,—the facility of landing and
‘re-embarking, as well as other essentials,—the
‘superior advantages of this mode of sending
‘troops over that of conveying them in hired
‘transports are altogether incalculable. One
‘advantage deserved especial notice, that of having
‘the ships under naval discipline, a circumstance
‘of the highest importance.’ And here Lord Mel-
ville produced the testimony of some navy officers.
One of them declared that it was totally imprac-
ticable to land an army in the face of a respectable
enemy in transport-boats. The greatest loss in
landing in Egypt was occasioned by the confusion
of the transport-boats, and had not the centre and
right been carried in men-of-wars’ boats, that
landing would not have been accomplished in the
gallant manner it was. Another officer stated,
that in the re-embarkation at Corunna, the trans-
ports made one trip with their boats when the men
of war made ten. ‘The officers,’ said Lord
Melville, ‘who superintended that midnight em-
‘barkation endured far more anxiety than they
‘had experienced in the hour of battle, owing to
‘the want of order and discipline among the
‘transports, which was such as to produce the
‘utmost confusion and embarrassment, and to
‘excite, in the minds of those present, the greatest
‘alarm for the fate of the army. Indeed, the

‘ serious consequences so much apprehended were
‘ only prevented by the exertions of the navy
‘ officers and seamen, and of the superintending
‘ commissioners of the Transport Board. These
‘ distressing circumstances would not have oc-
‘ curred, if, instead of common transports, there
‘ had been regular troop-ships, under naval
‘ discipline, whose officers would have been atten-
‘ tive and obedient to the signals made to point
‘ out to them the positions which the respective
‘ ships were to take and maintain.

‘ I cannot,’ said Lord Melville, ‘ entertain a
‘ doubt, that if, at the beginning of last year, there
‘ had existed in this country an establishment of
‘ armed troop-ships, adequate to the conveyance
‘ of even eight or ten thousand men, a very con-
‘ siderable portion, if not the whole, of the enemy’s
‘ ships at Flushing might have been captured or
‘ destroyed ; and, if it had been thought expedient,
‘ the basin might, without much difficulty, have
‘ been destroyed also. I have said, if it had been
‘ thought expedient, because I am strongly
‘ impressed with an opinion, that, if there had been
‘ such an establishment of floating barracks as I
‘ am now recommending, neither the evacuation
‘ of Walcheren, nor the destruction of the basin at
‘ Flushing would have been necessary. Few men
‘ will, I think, conceive it probable, that because
‘ the enemy’s ships were not in a condition to quit
‘ the basin of Flushing in the months of February
‘ and March of last year, we were therefore equally
‘ sure of finding them still there in the months of
‘ July and August, when our great armament
‘ sailed for the Scheldt ; consequently the pros-

‘pect of capturing or destroying them was reduced to the single chance of a successful attack upon Antwerp. If, however, there had been, in the beginning of last year, such an establishment as that for which I now contend, eight or ten thousand men might have been easily embarked, without ostentation or parade, and might have proceeded to the point of attack in perfect secrecy, when, in conjunction with our blockading fleet, a successful result would, I confidently believe, have crowned their operations.

‘The plan, then, which I submit to the House, is simply this; I propose to fit out, from the ordinary of the navy, a number of armed troop-ships, adequate to the accommodation of 24,000 men. The troops to be divided into detachments, each properly commanded; and to be accompanied and escorted by a few two-decked ships, and a certain number of frigates and light-armed vessels. These flying armaments to be distributed along the enemy’s coasts, and to act either separately or conjointly, according to circumstances; and, if their operations were judiciously conducted, they might, (besides annihilating the coasting, and such other trade as may still be carried on by our enemies,) by keeping up a constant alarm on their coasts, oblige them to draw a very great part of their armies down to their coasts, for the purpose of protecting them against our attacks and predatory incursions; and such a system of warfare would thus act in the most beneficial manner, both as a means of co-operating with our allies, and of effectually annoying our enemies. It is

‘scarcely necessary to observe that, if at any time an object should present itself upon which we could, with effect and benefit, employ together the whole 24,000 men, a single letter from the War-office and the Admiralty could speedily assemble them at any rendezvous most expedient for the execution of the projected service.

‘Such ships of war as may be appropriated to the reception and conveyance of troops, should be fitted, armed, manned, and equipped, on the following reduced scale:—the crew not to exceed, at the utmost, one-third of the proper complement of men;—no ship to carry more than 20, nor less than 12 guns (according to her class), and these to be principally carronades;—the ships also to have reduced masts and yards, the original lower masts only being kept in; the wear and tear of a ship so fitted and employed would not exceed one-fourth of an active cruiser, and the expenses and charges would, in the aggregate, be less than one half of the expenses and charges incurred for ships when fitted, armed, and equipped for the purposes of war.—And here it is very material to state, that these opinions have the full and entire concurrence of several naval officers, whose experience and judgment entitle them to perfect confidence in this respect; and that one of these officers commanded, nearly the whole of the late war, either an armed transport or a troop-ship, and was present at all the most important conjunct operations.’

Lord Melville then entered into a detail of estimates, shewing that it would be more economical

to employ troop-ships than hired transports, even in mere direct expense. ‘ Besides,’ said he, ‘ a very great additional security would be derived against the capture and loss of great numbers of our seamen and soldiers in hired transports. I should be most unwilling to estimate the lives of either on data of pecuniary compensation : but if any cold calculator should think it advisable to follow out such an investigation, he might find, upon inquiry, that the expense of the recruiting service amounts to an enormous sum. Upwards of 130 transports have been captured or lost since the commencement of the present war. About 1700 persons have been taken in them ; about 1900 have perished. The cold calculator may take this into his account :—but I reject all such calculations,—I hold the life of a British sailor or soldier to be inestimable ; and if I had the means of bringing forward the evidence of our enemies upon that subject, I should willingly rest upon their testimony.

‘ It has been objected,’ he continued, ‘ that the equipment and keeping up the requisite number of armed troop-ships would be such a drain upon the navy, and would require so many seamen, as to cause serious inconvenience to the naval service. Now, the establishment which I have proposed would require 48,000 tons of shipping : the tonnage of the British navy is about 800,000 ; and let me ask, whether any man, competent to form a judgement on the subject, can doubt that, if ships to the extent of 48,000 tons were to be appropriated for the conveyance of troops, the

‘ remainder would not be more than amply sufficient for every naval service for which our fleet can possibly be required? In 1800 and 1801, the number of troop-ships and armed transports that were employed amounted to 50 sail, and their tonnage to about 50,000 tons, which we had no hesitation in thus employing at that time, notwithstanding the fleets of France, Spain, and Holland, amounted to about 100 sail of the line. At present, the Russian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, or French force, amounts collectively to only 71 sail of the line, while there are 105 sail of the British line now in commission. In truth, I am strongly impressed with a conviction that the naval establishment of the country is now upon a scale considerably exceeding what, in wisdom, in sound policy, and on every principle of sound economy, it ought to be. In my judgment, 81 sail of the line are sufficient for European service, being thus distributed; 20 to the Baltic, 18 to watch the motions of the Dutch fleet, the French fleet in the Scheldt and at Cherbourg, 12 for the ports in the Bay of Biscay, 21 for the Mediterranean and Black Sea, 10 for the service of Lisbon and Cadiz; 10 ships of the line would suffice for foreign service: the whole force requisite being 91, which I consider amply sufficient for every probable demand.

‘ I trust your lordships will believe, that I should be one of the last men to recommend that our naval establishment should be put upon a footing of doubt or nice balance with the force of

‘ the enemy. Our superiority ought at all times
‘ to be decisive and commanding ; but I contend
‘ that, considering the scarcity of naval timber, and
‘ the high price of naval stores of every descrip-
‘ tion, this is not a moment when the country
‘ ought to give way to a wasteful, ostentatious,
‘ and prodigal expenditure ; and such I consider
‘ an unnecessary number of ships in commission,
‘ if they be either detained in our own ports, or
‘ sent where they are not likely to meet with an
‘ enemy. I do maintain that, circumstanced as
‘ the country now is, we ought to husband our
‘ navy, particularly our ships of the line, in order
‘ that we may keep as many as possible sound
‘ and entire to meet future exigencies, when the
‘ increased strength of our enemies may render
‘ our equipment and employment of a larger force
‘ essential to the preservation and safety of the
‘ empire.

‘ These are sentiments which I have long en-
‘ tertained, and they are not declared at the pre-
‘ sent moment for the purpose of supporting a
‘ favourite proposition ; still less with any inten-
‘ tion of either idly or factiously censuring the ad-
‘ ministration of the country. It will always give
‘ me pain, when I cannot concur in the measures
‘ of those to whom his majesty may think proper
‘ to intrust the administration of public affairs ; and
‘ it is peculiarly painful to me to criticise the admi-
‘ nistration of a department over which I once pre-
‘ sided. I am aware of the imputations to which
‘ such a line of conduct is liable, and nothing would
‘ induce me to undertake such a task, but the con-
‘ viction I entertain that, in some very important

‘ particulars, his majesty is not well advised on
‘ the naval and military interests of the country.

‘ The termination of the war in which we are
‘ now engaged, no human being can foresee ; and
‘ I have no hesitation in declaring that, so long as
‘ France shall retain the sovereignty of the con-
‘ tinent of Europe, it is, in my judgement, impos-
‘ sible to make a desirable peace with her ; im-
‘ pressed, as I am, with a belief that any peace
‘ which she might propose would but too probably
‘ lead to the subjugation of this country, by pre-
‘ senting to the ruler of France an opportunity of
‘ creating a naval force, which, in conjunction
‘ with the fleets of the other maritime powers of
‘ Europe, (all of whom, with the exception of
‘ Spain and Portugal, are now completely under
‘ his control), might dispute with us the sove-
‘ reignty of the ocean. This is the event to which
‘ we must look forward, as then, though perhaps
‘ not till then, we should have to contend, not
‘ merely for our independence, but for our very
‘ existence. While we, however, retain the do-
‘ minion of the sea, and preserve the fabric of our
‘ constitution, which is the true and genuine
‘ source of our manufactures, of our commerce,
‘ of our agriculture, and of our revenue, we have
‘ nothing to apprehend from the boasted threats,
‘ or from the power of France. These may be
‘ considered as mere bugbears ; let the war be
‘ conducted on a rational and practicable system,
‘ and we shall find our resources perfectly ade-
‘ quate to the contest, so long as circumstances
‘ and the safety of the country may render a con-
‘ tinuation of it necessary.

‘ I am aware that any very great diminution of
‘ our naval establishment would have the effect of
‘ throwing a considerable number of our meri-
‘ torious officers out of employment ; but I cannot
‘ suppose that any serious opposition can be fairly
‘ grounded on this circumstance, when it is re-
‘ collected that the same effect would be produced
‘ in a much greater degree by the return of peace.
‘ I do not overlook, nor am I disposed to under-
‘ rate, this inconvenience ; but I have long fore-
‘ seen, and am strongly of opinion, that a remedy
‘ might be found to compensate the service for the
‘ hardship to individuals, arising out of the un-
‘ precedented extent of our naval establishment,
‘ and the impossibility at all times of giving
‘ employment to a large proportion of its best
‘ officers. But every such act of benevolence ought
‘ to flow spontaneously from the sovereign, and a
‘ particular suggestion coming from any other
‘ quarter would be an impertinent intrusion.’

Lord Mulgrave replied, that it was far more expensive to employ ships of war in conveying troops than hired transports, and that he thought it impossible to get over the difficulties which arose from the clashing of the two services, when troops were embarked on board king’s ships. He deprecated any idea of reducing the navy in these times, and arguing that the motion ought to be resisted as an unnecessary interference with the executive government, he moved the previous question.— With regard to the necessity of keeping up our naval force at its present extent, Lord Mulgrave argued rightly ; his reply, in all its other parts, was not such as was due to Lord Melville’s expe-

rience and to the importance of the subject. One misconception in it Lord Melville pointed out; . . he had not recommended that ships of war should be employed on their present establishment for conveying troops, but that the troop-ships should form a separate establishment, under special regulations. The ministry were not disposed to listen to his advice. The Earl of Liverpool, without expressing any opinion upon the subject, said, it was one of great difficulty, and which required very serious consideration, so that it could not now be decided upon. The previous question was therefore agreed on without a division.

If Lord Melville was prevented by his removal from office from forming such an establishment as he now proposed, the country suffered a far more serious loss in his removal than in the death of both the great party leaders, who have been so loudly lamented. The advantages of such a measure, are even more considerable than they were here stated; for when, in 1801, we had such ships fitted for troops, twice the number of sailors really wanted were allotted to them. An Indiaman of equal tonnage is reckoned well manned with 120 men, whereas these had 250; at once narrowing the accommodation for troops and weakening the navy. The least class of two deckers (now almost banished from the line) will commodiously carry 800 men each, field-pieces, and horses for the officers. If we had 20 battalions always afloat, and distributed in the several ports, from Leith southward round to Milford Haven, and at Cork, the ships stored with provisions, and with field necessaries, according to a list, as easily made out

by an officer who had seen service, as the contents of a medicine chest by an army surgeon, will any person say that 20 battalions, or 16,000 men, thus stationed upon the alert, some of them able to sail with every wind that could blow, would not present to the enemy an object of alarm, which could not be guarded against by three times their number? Would they, with such a danger before their eyes, invade our colonies? or would they not rather find it necessary to place double garrisons in all the ports of the continent? Let them possess ports if they must pay for them so dearly, and then calculate their gains in the war against British commerce! Another not less important benefit would arise from such an establishment. The real security of the enemy at present is in the intelligence which they gain during the equipment of an expedition, and which it is not possible to prevent them from gaining; . . upon this hinge turns half their power, that is, half their disposable force. No deficiency in our military arrangements is at once so obvious, and so easily reformed as this. Double the number of these troop-ships, and no unfortified port in Europe could be occupied by the enemy with impunity.

A measure of essential utility to the service was brought forward by Mr. Rose. He obtained leave to bring in a bill for the June 7. increase of seamen, by establishing naval seminaries on the coasts, where boys might be properly educated for four or five years. They were to be supplied from those who were parish paupers, of whom the number amounts to 90,000; they would not cost government more than five pounds

each, and this supply would keep up a succession of seamen, to the amount of 7000 every year. This will diminish that great evil, the impress service, which might be rendered altogether unnecessary by a few measures more in the same spirit. Liberty to retire, at the end of one-and-twenty years' service after the age of twenty, with a sum equivalent to the computed value of their full pay* for life, would probably of itself effect this most desirable reform.

We have the princely establishment of Greenwich, which is deservedly the boast of England, . . . but Greenwich is not sufficient ; and it may safely be asserted, that no man was ever induced to enter the navy, by looking on to that asylum as his reward. To the old seaman, indeed, it becomes a point of hope ; but, under the present system, his hope is of that nature which maketh the heart sick. The old seaman, after many years' service as quarter-master (one of the most comfortable stations an old sailor can fill), gets removed from

* Full pay for life is what was originally proposed in this paper. But Mr. Windham's similar plan for the army has since proved how enormously retirement pensions are liable to collusion and abuse of all kinds. It was found that the number of pensioners had not diminished in fourteen years from the termination of the war : fraudulent admissions had balanced the deaths.

Another and weightier consideration (because no system of checks could prevent or diminish the evil) has had its share in leading me to this alteration. Small pensions, such as secure to the holder a bare competence, are likely to operate upon such men in most cases, as an inducement to an idle and useless life. Whereas prudent and adventurous men would embark in some way of business the capital which they received at their discharge ; and they who made away with it in wastefulness at once, would take to the sea again, while they were yet fit for it. And this would be better, both for the provident and improvident, than if they were pensioned,—1830.

the conn, when eye-sight and hearing begin to fail, and is put in the gunner's crew, to drag on as long as he can make a cartridge, or a wad, or point a quarter-deck or cabin breeching; till the doctor at last, weary of attempting to cure old rheumatic complaints, and desirous of lessening the number on the sick list, applies to have him invalided; . . that is, dismissed from the service, with the privilege of tottering clear of a press-gang for the remainder of his life. Suppose him to be certain of Greenwich, (which he is not,—for it is a matter of favour, and not of right,) age, or incurable infirmities, are the qualifications which must entitle him to it. Such a prospect may indeed afford him consolation when those evils are coming on, but it can hardly be regarded as hope: hope should be of the nature of joy; and if we would encourage men to enter the service, the reward of their service should be certain, and the time when they may claim it definite, and not too distant. Their discharge they should be entitled to at the end of the first term of seven years; with the second term, an increase of pay should commence; a second increase at the end of the fourteen years, and at the expiration of one-and-twenty, a sum equivalent to full pay for life; and an honorary distinction if they chose to serve longer, from year to year.

Oh that statesmen would but feel and understand how much more easy it is to lead and encourage men to their duty by hope, than to keep them in it by fear! The system here recommended offers the surest mode of gradually abolishing those punishments which are disgraceful to our nature; for a forfeiture of time, in proportion to the offence,

would be far more effectual than the brutalizing lash. While our armies are recruited from an uneducated peasantry and a depraved manufacturing populace, there will always be some subjects so vicious and so brutal, that nothing but the fear of bodily pain may be powerful enough to deter them from guilt, and nothing but the infliction of it operate as punishment. There are crimes too for which it seems to be as properly called for, by the principles of vindictive justice, as in cases of murder life is required for life. Against such crimes and such men, a discretionary power is left in courts-martial by the law as it is now amended; but lighter offences will from henceforth be more fitly punished by confinement. The disposition of the commander-in-chief, the opinions of the ablest officers, and the general feeling of the age, may make us assured of this; and those officers who shall hereafter continue the practice of flogging, in cases which are not flagrantly atrocious, will render themselves deservedly infamous. This good has been done, and the reform in this direction need not be carried farther: it must be perfected by other means; by national education, which will send men into the army when properly instructed in their moral and religious duties; by limited service, and increase of pay in proportion to length of time, which will render forfeiture of time a punishment sufficiently severe for most cases; and by honorary rewards and pensions, which will foster in the men a sense of honour, and make hope the inseparable companion of duty in a sailor's and a soldier's life.

Honorary rewards would operate as strongly

upon the men as they do now upon the officers. An individual, Alexander Davison, distributed medals to all who had been in the battle of Aboukir; and we have known instances wherein it has been one of the last requests of a dying seaman, that that medal should be carefully transmitted to his friends. It is the worst of all policies to degrade men, and to make them feel that they are degraded; teach them to know their moral and religious duties, which, by means of that system for which Great Britain is indebted to Dr. Bell, seems likely now to be done; teach them to respect themselves, . . cherish in them the sense of honour and of justice, . . and martial law may give place to a practice more congenial to Englishmen, and to the laws of England. Trial by jury (against which there can be no just exception here) may take its place: and thus that tyranny, by which most mutinies are provoked, would be prevented. Put men upon their honour and their conscience, and if a comrade be guilty, there is no fear that they will pronounce him innocent for the sake of screening him from punishment.

Let not the reader start at the assertion, that most mutinies are provoked by tyranny. If there be one evil propensity more common than another, it is that which leads to the abuse of power; and in proof of this we may appeal, not only to the evidence of all history, but to every man's schoolboy experience. Many a man has been made commander in the navy before he has ceased to be a boy; the authority of which he feels himself possessed makes him imperious, while the weight makes him anxious and fretful: he harasses the

men for want of that method and self-confidence which nothing but experience can give, and thinks by severity to force respect. Men of good heart and good understanding outgrow this, and perceive their error; but it is a perilous stage through which they pass; and sometimes, before the captain has acquired experience, the crew have become desperate. We could instance an officer, in whom, when time had ripened him, the elements of firmness and gentleness were mixed in such perfect union, that no man was ever more heartily or more justly beloved by those under his command; but he had been trusted with command too young, and the remembrance of the severities which he had then exercised, and of their consequences, troubled him on his death-bed. But examples of a different nature might be cited; men might be named who have shewn themselves incapable of shame or remorse, and whose unendurable tyranny has sometimes proved fatal to others, and sometimes to themselves. Persons acquainted with the navy will recollect one case of shipwreck, where the captain is vehemently suspected to have perished, either because some of his crew seized that opportunity of avenging themselves, or because none of them would stretch out a hand to save him. And in a case of capture (how recent or how remote is of no consequence), the crew of a king's ship are reported to have fired without ball, in order that they might be made prisoners, and thus delivered from a state of oppression under which they had neither remedy nor hope.

It is true, that tyranny and oppression are provided against by martial law, but these offences are

not in their nature so definite as mutiny; neither are they, nor can they be punished with the same severity, even if there were or could be the same disposition to punish them. Had it not been for a mere accident, Captain Lake would have received no other punishment than a private reprimand, for an act which nothing but accident prevented from being murder. Other instances might be given; but the invidious labour may well be spared, where the object is not to declaim against evils which have existed or may exist, but to shew by what means they may be prevented. The system of limited service, increase of pay in proportion to length of time, with a discharge upon full pay for life at the expiration of one-and-twenty years after the age of twenty, seems to afford those means. Were that system thoroughly established in the army and navy, volunteers would never be wanting for either; and when it was known that men might retire from the service of their country at any time after the age of one-and-forty, with such a capital as, if prudently employed, might afford them a comfortable provision for life, no other bounty would be required to tempt them into the service. Calculate the chances of life and of war, and it will be found that no great additional expense would be incurred by thus giving the bounty at the end of the term instead of the beginning; but if an additional yearly million were necessary, it would be well bestowed, and a hearth-tax or poll-tax for such a purpose would be cheerfully paid by the people of Great Britain.

ESSAY III.

ON THE ECONOMICAL REFORMERS.

THE state economists have for some years past excited much discussion in parliament, and considerable interest in the public. The attempts which they have made toward the abolition of reversionary grants and sinecures have been the most popular of their proceedings; the former might well have been conceded to them, as a practice peculiarly liable to abuse, and which mortgages the influence of the crown, at the same time that it offends the feelings of the people. Sinecures also have been made offensive to the people; but the necessity of some mode of remuneration for public services was fully admitted by Mr. Bankes, and there can be no doubt, as was objected to him, that under whatever name remuneration may be awarded, the same feeling toward it would exist as long as any party in the country should think proper to raise a cry against the expenditure and the existing circumstances of government. Some mode, however, must exist, under any form of government*, which does not, like that of

* The consequences of the Superannuation Act of 1810 (50 George III. c. 117), which passed on occasion of Mr. Bankes's motion, are very instructive, inasmuch as the result of injudicious reform cannot be better illustrated. In the year 1821, returns were made to parliament

ancient Carthage, confine public offices exclusively to the wealthy. Aristotle, comparing together the several forms of polity then in the world, praises the institutions of that commercial state above all others, excepting only this limitation of

which exhibited a profusion of superannuations, especially in the Customs and Excise, in which the great number of inferior officers personally unknown to the commissioners at the head of these departments had, perhaps, led to improper grants of this kind. The government of 1822, feeling themselves considerably pressed by repeated motions for economy and retrenchment, and being aware of a mistake in the scale of superannuations established by the Act of 1810, amended it by a new act, and therein sought popularity by creating a superannuation-fund: that is, by deducting $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., or in some cases 5 per cent., from all official salaries, and 10 per cent. from the amount of all other official emoluments. The sacrifice excited little notice, and the Act (3 George IV. c. 113.) received the royal assent in August, 1822. But it did not remain long in force. Mr. Stuart Wortley (afterwards Lord Wharncliffe) presented a petition against it in May, 1824, when a conversation ensued of some length, in which this unfortunate Act was almost universally reprobated as a partial and therefore unjust income tax; and it was urged successfully that liberal superannuation allowances were quite as much for the benefit of the public as of the officer. Heretofore, it was said, when a clerk became old or infirm, he was enabled to retire upon his earnings from the fees of office, accumulated and reserved by his own prudence for that purpose; or the head of the department, in meritorious cases, might be able to appoint him to some sinecure office. But fees and sinecures being abolished, superannuation allowances became necessary for the efficiency of the public service; because it was become impossible in common prudence for a veteran clerk willingly to retire; and almost equally impossible, in moral feeling, to dismiss him in old age to penury and distress. Hence the public officers could not but, in the course of a few years, be reduced to a state of decrepitude, unless a liberal superannuation act were kept in full force, in lieu of the abolished fees and sinecures.

This reasoning was so conclusive, that the repeal of the Act of 1822 experienced no difficulty; and the discomfiture of false economy was so complete in this instance, that all sums of money retained under the Act of 1822, were required by the Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV. c. 104.) to be 'repaid to the contributors, their executors or administrators.'

office, and the right of the populace to interfere when the senate was not unanimous : from these causes that prince of philosophers, the most sagacious man whom the world has yet produced, seems to predict the downfall of that flourishing commonwealth ; and its downfall was in fact produced by them. The French are fond of reminding us of Carthage ; we should do well ourselves to bear in mind the history of its fall, . . not with any reference to external danger, which we may despise as long as we have sense and virtue to defy it, . . but with a view to those internal circumstances in which some analogy may be found to those which brought on the ruin of the Carthaginians.

The mere object of commuting sinecures for pensions, if it had not engaged the attention of parliament, would be too trifling to deserve consideration, being obviously a change of name, and of nothing else. In what form the reward is bestowed, the people care not, provided it be well bestowed. The vote of money for the Nelson estate, the pension to Lord Wellington, and the sinecure which Mr. Pitt possessed, were regarded by the people with equal satisfaction ; however bitterly Mr. Pitt was attacked by his political enemies, that he was warden of the Cinque Ports was never objected to him as one of his offences. By the mere change nothing could be gained, and something is always lost by an unsuccessful attempt at currying favour with a party whom it is not possible to conciliate. Upon the point of economy, the warmest advocates of the measure do not pretend that much is to be gained ; the

probability in fact is on the other side, and as the arguments for the abolition of sinecures lie on the surface, it so happens that we need not go deeper for the arguments against it.

The emoluments of office, almost in every department, and especially in all the highest, are notoriously inadequate. Suppose a man capable of assuming the reins of government, and conducting the nation to prosperity and glory, . . . a man endowed with those powers of mind which Mr. Pitt was supposed to possess ; and like him without such an hereditary fortune as allows of idleness, or precludes the necessity of increasing it. If to such a man an office be offered, he hesitates at quitting his profession to accept it, because the salary is not adequate to the expenses which the situation brings with it ; in the changes of politics he may be driven out, and find himself a ruined man. To these objections, while sinecures remain, there is this reply ; time and chance happen to all, . . . take the office, no doubt some sinecure will fall, and you will be provided for in case of dismissal. This argument will generally be successful, though not exactly what it ought to be ; but national affairs must be conducted upon general rules, and the love of chance is inherent in all men ; daily experience evinces this, the price of a lottery ticket being double its real value. A sinecure is a prize in the official state lottery, and the uncertainty of the contingency augments accordingly its intrinsic value. It is therefore the most frugal mode of tempting men of talents into the service of the state.

Except the two tellerships of the Exchequer

(which expire with the present possessors), there are not more than sixteen sinecures which amount to 3000*l.* a-year each; and this, considering the superior income of so many of our merchants and shopkeepers, cannot be thought too much for a retired statesman. The two unregulated tellerships are worth 20,000*l.* a-year each, in time of war, and the manner in which the emoluments of this office have become unreasonable is worthy of detail. The Exchequer itself is the most curious piece of official antiquity in Europe, being still conducted as in the time of the Norman kings, with a solemn apparatus of tellers and tallies, pipes and pells, and a moderate consumption of parchment, oak-sticks, and bad Latin; the last of these articles is so contrived, that a man may write the language all his life in the Exchequer, without knowing a word of the grammar, the termination of all declinable words being omitted, as formerly by the provincials of the Roman empire. The auditor's office alone is now of real importance, all the sums received from various taxes being classed there, and the national accounts annually prepared for parliament. The tellers must formerly have been essential in any kind of Exchequer; but they have been rendered useless by paper money, though the polished scale-beams for weighing 1000-guinea bags of money are still suspended, awaiting another golden age. Neither was the fee of the tellers exorbitant at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., while they were compelled at their own risk to receive money '*ad numerum, pondus, et arsuram,*' by number, weight, and assay, and that too when every principal town was allowed to have a mint of its own.

The improvement of the coinage materially enlarged the gain of the tellerships, and the prevalence of paper-money has now rendered the office nearly a sinecure, and quite unnecessary. A mode has lately been pointed out to bring the income of these offices within reasonable bounds, by voting many of the public grants ‘without deduction;’ and it was understood that this would have been done more largely in Mr. Pitt’s time, had not the tellers preferred paying a large voluntary contribution annually towards the war.

Every liberal man is more or less a lover of antiquity, and to destroy the Exchequer would in that view be an irreparable loss. The ancient Dialogue of the Exchequer, which is 630 years old, opens with as much pleasant locality as Izaak Walton’s Angler. ‘In the 23d year of our good King Henry II., as I was sitting in the Tower window which overlooks the river Thames, suddenly an earnest voice addressed me, saying, ‘Have you not read, master, that there is no more use in hidden knowledge than in hidden treasure*?’—and thereupon the Dialogue proceeds through all the complex arrangements of the Exchequer. But though, from reverence to antiquity, the sinecures of that office ought least of all others to be abolished, nothing can be more unreasonable than the present purpose of building a new Exchequer at another place. It is one thing to retain a few harmless offices in being, and

* *Anno 23d Regni Regis Henrici Secundi, cum sederem ad fenestram speculæ quæ est juxta fluvium Tamensem, factum est verbum hominis in impetu loquentis ad me, dicens, Magister, non legisti quod in Scientia vel Thesauro abscondito nulla sit utilitas?*—Dial. Scac.

another to expend half a million in erecting a palace for their reception. Besides the charm of antiquity vanishes the moment you carry the Exchequer from its old situation on the bank of the Thames.

The abolition of sinecures would be, to say the least of it, a measure of doubtful utility. But other measures of this economical committee, which has been lately appointed from year to year, for the purpose of checking and lessening the public expenditure, principally aiming at the diminution of salaries and emoluments, are unequivocally mischievous. When it is considered that the value of money, and consequently of these salaries and emoluments, is every day sensibly diminishing, and within the last twenty years has been thus virtually lessened a full half, the time does not seem appropriate for these well-meant efforts. Salaries for services not then overpaid have been necessarily augmented, and he must have performed a very light duty indeed who could bear the defalcation of half his stipend without remonstrance. From these causes, perhaps, it has arisen that the labours of the committee have produced no perceptible benefit, and the expediency of its continuance, under such circumstances may therefore well be doubted. In reality, there is reason to suspect that its effects are exactly the reverse of what is intended. To place this in its proper light, we must consider the situation of the public and of its servants. The revenue of the united kingdom is about seventy-one millions per annum, applicable to national objects, of which the charge on account of the

national debt for interest, principal repaid, and management, is about thirty-eight: this having been replaced by an annual loan, averaging at about thirty millions since the commencement of the present war, the money expended may be taken at sixty-three. No individual of as many thousands per annum (and our opulent country furnishes many examples of much larger incomes) would deem it advisable to employ, not the best, but the cheapest servants, in all his affairs which relate to receipt and expenditure; and he would be pointed at by all mankind as signally imprudent if he did so. How is it possible that the same liberal economy should not be advisable in the management of a national income and expenditure, a thousand-fold in amount, and of national affairs a thousand-fold in importance*?

* This sort of reasoning, in behalf of competent salaries, cannot be more briefly or more conclusively urged, than it was by Lord Bexley, when Chancellor of the Exchequer,—a man whose knowledge and acuteness will be justly appreciated, when the vaunted discoveries of the bullionists and of the new political economists shall be forgotten. He observed in the course of debate, that if the public could be satisfied with servants without liberal education, without talents or responsibility of character, the office which he had the honour to fill might find plenty of ready occupants, although the salary were reduced to fifty pounds a-year.

Strafford (then Lord Wentworth), writing to Mr. Secretary Coke upon an intended reformation of fees in Ireland, premises that it must 'be carried with that equality and moderation, that as we are to study 'the ease of the people, so we are to have care to preserve for the 'officer a benefit moderate and competent, such as may encourage men 'of understanding and parts to bestow themselves upon the service of 'his majesty and the public; holding it in my judgement a great pre-judice in a commonwealth where the magistrate and ministerial 'officers are too much straitened or shortened in the reward for their 'service, which is ever accompanied with the one of these mischiefs, 'that men of ability despise and neglect them, or otherwise unduly

The reward of the higher officers of state ought to be sufficient to maintain them in suitable dignity and splendour; but it is notoriously otherwise in fact. It is known that Mr. Pitt, a man of no private fortune, but also of no superfluous expenses, and unincumbered with the maintenance of a family, after being prime minister for twenty years, died deeply involved in debt, by merely keeping up the indispensable appearance of his office; and it is well known that, except the lord chancellor, no public man has the least possibility of saving anything from the scanty reward of his labours. This is unjust. But it is supposed that the gratification of ambition stands in place of payment; and hitherto, indeed, no want has been experienced of men ready to fill these offices. That one of the proposed reforms would narrow the competition, by excluding the class of men among whom those who are fitted to fill them are likely to be found, has already been shewn; but it is the inferior servants of the public who are chiefly aimed at by the committee of public expenditure. The inconvenience arising from penurious salaries is not immediately felt; it stifles the seed rather than destroys the mature crop. It operates in a natural and inevitable manner: young clerks of activity and merit find better situations in life, leaving behind them the stupid and the idle to succeed in due seniority to the higher stations in every office. This dangerous effect of

‘and unwarrantably exercise them, and thereby become so far obnoxious unto particular men, as they are never daring at after to comply with those stricter and more excellent duties they owe the state and themselves.’—*Strafford Letters*, i. 304. Dublin edition.

illiberal economy has been brought pretty intelligibly before the committee in more instances than one, and must have given them cause of serious doubt whether to persevere in that part of their employment which relates to the diminution of salaries.

The other branch of inquiry confided to this committee, appears to relate to the public accounts of the kingdom, and the checks which have been established to prevent peculation. Certain it is, that nothing requires attention more pressing than the manner of passing, or rather of investigating, these accounts, since the checks which overstrained jealousy has already devised are such that the committee apprehend there is 'a strong indisposition on the part of many persons of scrupulous integrity to become public* accountants.' They might have added, that no public accountant can be found who has not repented of becoming so; scarcely any one who has not been inadvertently involved in this species of torture, which it will be seen he must usually leave to his heirs after him. A statement of these accumulated checks, and of the difficulty of obtaining a discharge (a *quietus*) for any sum expended for the public, would be too tedious, nor would it be credible to a person in habits of ordinary fair dealing and good faith. A short sketch must suffice, and the army accounts may serve for an instance. A vast quantity of these are actually examined four several times, at the War Office, the Pay Office, the Army Comptroller's Office, and finally (after a lapse of many years)

* Expenditure Committee, 5th Report, 2d part. p. 37.

at the Audit Office; besides intervening formalities of supposed examinations at the Treasury and Exchequer. The other great branches of public expenditure are also repeatedly examined, some thrice, some only twice; and scarcely any accounts are finally passed on one examination, excepting only of those small sums which are issued under a form reprobated by the committee, and these are audited at the Treasury.

The proceedings of a public accountant, the person accountable, are therefore in this order: First, he makes up his account and collects his vouchers, which being examined and found to be correct, credit is given him accordingly at the first office to which he has recourse; after some delay, the same papers are transmitted to another office, and again examined and again returned: then (in the case first mentioned) they go to the comptroller of army accounts, appointed because a peculiar sort of knowledge is justly deemed necessary in that duty; and after all these repeated examinations, (highly dangerous to the accountant from the possible loss of irretrievable vouchers,) the miserable man is transferred to the grand theatre of torture, the Audit Office. After an anxious delay of years, (ten or even twenty!) he learns that the examination is commenced, and is soon assailed by a string of questions, 'from * 100 * to 700 in number,' chiefly containing technical objections to the vouchers, as wholly inadmissible, according to the 'inflexible† rules' of the office, which requires vouchers both in form

* P. 48.

† P. 30.

and number quite unheard of in any other place. To plead ignorance of such an extraordinary manner of examination, or to insinuate that it is wholly unjust, unless the accountant had received notice of these rules, with printed particulars, on the unlucky day when he first received public money into his hands, is perfectly useless. Remedy there is none, and he has the task of procuring additional vouchers of money transactions long since past. If by chance he has been somewhat aware of the strictness of the Audit Office, and so escapes this general inconvenience, his vouchers are examined in the manner of a special pleader employed to find colour for a suit against him; and legal debates of this kind take up most of the time of the commissioners of the Audit Office. It will be seen, therefore, that every public accountant is presumed to be a rogue and a thief, till the contrary is proved by legal evidence; which is about as reasonable as if every man in England were to be tried at the Old Bailey to establish the innocence of his character.

Yet this does not represent half the hardship. From the unavoidable slowness of such a suspicious office, the accusations are generally posthumous, and the accountant's representatives are attacked, when an explanatory detail of circumstances is impossible; and the 'inflexible rules' of the office charge against them sums which every man in that office is satisfied have been duly and faithfully expended in the public service. Thus, neither living nor dying can the public accountant find repose: his anxiety and danger are transferred to his heirs with double aggravation: his private

property, real and personal, is liable to the Exchequer process of 'an extent,' which seizes in preference to any other creditor; even the title of an estate is vitiated, if it be known ever to have belonged to a public accountant, as being still liable in possibility to an extent; and under these circumstances no prudent man will have any dealings, or enter into any family connection with a wretch so dangerously marked. To all this is added the injustice of refusing any allowance for the expense of procuring extraordinary vouchers, much less for the time and labour spent in correspondence and attendances.

But let not the feelings naturally arising from this shocking detail excite indignation against the officers at the Audit Office; they best know, and consequently most lament, the tortures of which they are the unwilling ministers. But their reputation and their livelihood entirely depend upon their adherence to the 'inflexible rules;' and the blame must be appropriated to the overstrained jealousy of the public themselves, who too readily, and against their better knowledge, speak of every public officer as a knave, and thus induce their representatives to make laws accordingly. The progress of this jealousy in modern times is somewhat curious. In 1785 and 1786, when the Audit Office was first instituted, the establishment cost nearly 10,000*l.* a-year: in 1802, the establishment and expense was doubled, and in 1806 doubled again: the annual expense now amounts to 46,000*l.*, a sum paid to a set of public officers to check others, which officers perhaps have not detected peculation to the amount of 46,000 pence

since their first institution. The last augmentation of this office was made under very suspicious circumstances. The then Chancellor of the Exchequer led the cry, and stated unaccounted millions, almost to the amount of the national debt; nor could it be otherwise, as the time of the executioner and of the sufferer is equally occupied by the unnecessary scrutiny of an office always, as such an office ever must be, ten or twenty years in arrear. But the statement answered its purpose, though explained to unwilling ears as a misrepresentation,—as only apparently and technically true, and meaning only that the accounts were not finally audited and ‘declared.’ In consequence, the public in this case paid a penalty for their suspicious humour; and a new administration could find no better way of providing for their friends, than by fostering these suspicions for a present purpose, as may be understood from the statement of the commissioners themselves, that of the ten new commissioners then appointed, two only were persons of experience, three had been but a few months in the office, and the other five were entirely strangers to the business.

Yet against these commissioners no imputation lies; they have laboured assiduously, and performed their invidious duties with unimpeachable integrity, and they are the first to deplore the impossibility of speedy progress under the strict rules of their office. One thing indeed in their conduct remains unexplained, but is probably explainable, and would not have been mentioned in this place did it not incidentally point out a mode of remedy for the mass of evil which we have described. At

the end of the law*, under which the additional establishment took place, and which really aimed at expediting the examination of public accounts, are two clauses, expressed in the most careful and precise terms, authorising the comptroller of army accounts to examine *finally* all commissariat accounts, and only in case of suspected embezzlement to transfer such accounts to the Audit Office. Yet (if the committee are not misinformed) these commissariat accounts, evidently the most difficult and complex in their nature, are still received at the Audit Office, exactly as if no law had passed to the contrary. Into this fact inquiry might be usefully directed; but the *principle* of the law is worth more notice, as opening the only practicable chance of forming such an arrangement as may really expedite public accounts, and take away a reproach eagerly insisted on by the factious. Let the committee inquire into the examination by the previous offices through which accounts pass: if insufficient, let it be amended, and the examination made final; and let no accountant whatever be condemned to the Audit Office, unless circumstances of suspicion appear against him, . . the only circumstances to which the inflexible rules are at all applicable. It is very well known to practical men, that one examination is often better than two, because the first examiner relies on the second for correction; and the second, in civility and caution, does not always choose to see more than the first. This would indeed be a national benefit of great magnitude, and worthy of the protracted labours of the committee, who must be

* 46 Geo. III. c. 101. § 19, 20.

well aware that the strictness of the Audit Office is rendered unavailing by the discretion vested in the Treasury to admit reasonable vouchers, without exercising which discretion no public account perhaps ever could have been passed. So that the process is as follows : first, you examine liberally ; then, after a delay of many years, you examine rigidly ; and lastly, after infinite correspondence and anxiety, you are necessitated to become liberal again. The two first steps of this process may be spared for the future, and men of 'scrupulous integrity' no longer deterred from undertaking the administration of public money.

Akin to the appointment of an additional establishment at the Audit Office, was the creation of sundry commissions of inquiry, of which the Board of Military Inquiry is the only one remaining ; and the proceedings of this board should serve as a pathetic lesson to posterity not to be suspicious overmuch. Persons with a large salary appointed to find fault, will seldom look for it without fancied success, as that success is the only justification of their own appointment and their own salaries. If they are human beings, they must have this feeling ; and woe be to the man whose conduct they have to scrutinize, or even individually to mention !

In July 1803, when the alarm of invasion was at its height, urgent orders were issued, that barracks for 50,000 men and 10,000 horses should be ready to receive the troops in October and November. No country but England could produce such celerity ; and in England it was hardly to be expected that a man could be found who

would singly undertake to direct the expenditure of half a million of money, at his own risk, in various parts of the kingdom, and in three months' time. Mr. Copeland, however, undertook and performed this Herculean task; and for his reward, four years afterwards, the barracks erected in this emergency, which, to a reasonable mind, must be supposed to have doubled the expense, . . . these barracks, under the direction of the Board of Military Inquiry, are coolly valued, by other surveyors, at current prices of workmanship and materials, and a list of trifling particulars, wherein the greatest difference of charge appeared, is collected, from whence an inference is drawn that Mr. Copeland had wronged the public 38 or 48 per cent. To insist upon this case is unnecessary, as we believe it is now seen in its true light, and in a fair way to be remedied; and especially as the military commissioners have been more careful since they have felt the spirited and satisfactory justification of the late Sir Henry Mildmay against their insinuations in the same report. Those insinuations exposed him at the time to general obloquy; the malignity of the public prints fomented that obloquy; and as those prints took care not to publish his justification, at the present moment his memory is odious among a great majority of his countrymen. Yet the commissioners of military inquiry are good and honourable men; the fault is entirely in their situation, and that situation is produced from the disease of the times. Let us blame only ourselves for their misdeeds.

The abolition of * fees of office is nearly allied to the intention of diminishing salaries, and, unless judiciously and cautiously applied, is more immediately mischievous. This may conveniently be shewn by an instance, which, not being of very recent date, may therefore be told without even the semblance of intentional offence. The accounts of naval officers, and especially of pursers, who have had occasion to expend public money, form an important part of the business at the Navy Office; and after what has been said of public accountants, it is unnecessary to describe the inconvenience sustained from any delay of settlement. It was usual, therefore, for such officers, on their arrival in port, to obtain permission to go to London for the settlement of their accounts; the leave of absence being short, and their account not having been prepared on purpose, they usually paid a moderate fee to some of the junior clerks to work at it after the regular hours of business. By

* ' I forgot to say a word about fees, (says Mr. Burke in a letter to Dr. Lawrence,) which it seems is one of the articles of charge against Mr. Windham's office. Whether they be exorbitant or not, is more than I can judge; but that they are profitable to the officer is no objection, provided they are not onerous to the public, or oppressive to those that pay them. This was so much my principle upon the reform, that I carefully reserved the fees to the Pay-Office; but in the progress of the bill, I was absolutely forced, by the frauds of Colonel Barré, acting on the principle of Lord Shelburn, who attributed every sort of public evil to fees, in a famous speech of his; and by the unparalleled treachery of our own party, I was beat out of my plan, and compelled, whether I would or not, to bring from that abolition a charge of 6000*l.* a-year, or rather more, upon the public, for the official expenses which before had cost nothing, except for the Pay-master's salary, and some other salaries, which latter were insignificant.'—*Correspondence*, p. 156.

this means the account being speedily made up and passed, they could again embark in the service of their country, without the gnawing reflection of leaving behind them unexplained open accounts, which must at least harass their families, in case of their decease abroad. The fees thus paid were, in some unlucky hour of speculative reform, deemed improper, and were accordingly abolished : the effect of this on the officer accountable requires no explanation ; the office clerks were consigned to comparative beggary, and the public lost that portion of their labour, which, though more particularly directed to the benefit of the accountant, was still so much work despatched, and therefore clear gain to the public, who, in consequence, had to pay many more clerks when work after office hours was prohibited ; thus an evil was achieved, of which it is difficult to say which of all the parties concerned it injured most. The abolition of fees has since been farther extended, though it may safely be said, that when the payment is voluntary, and for service performed, no solid objection lies against the practice. On the contrary, it invigorates the activity of every office in the same manner that task-work produces a more labour than day-work, and a great increase of any establishment must therefore follow the abolition of voluntary fees for expedition *. This mis-

* Experience has proved that the regulation of offices by establishing a fee-fund at the expense of individuals heretofore entitled to the fees, has much increased official expenditure, instead of diminishing it ; the natural repugnance against paying over to the consolidated fund fees accruing in any office, having imperceptibly produced a facility in the heads of departments to recommend an increase of officers, or of allowances, so as to absorb the entire fee-funds in the first instance, and hence has, from habit, proceeded much farther, in despite of all

chievous species of reform has been carried farther in Ireland, by a special commission for that purpose, than hitherto in Great Britain.

All things considered, the Public-Expenditure committee may be regarded as one of the causes which create discontent and even disaffection in the people, who cannot fail to infer that there must be great need of amendment, when they see so much pains taken, session after session, to amend. And what is the result of all this labour?.. Regulations which diminish the income, lessen the respectability, and destroy the comfort of public officers; without eventually saving anything for the public. Every man who deems himself unworthily questioned, or feels that he is in danger of being so, has in effect lost much of the value of his office, if reputation be thought of any value in England,..where indeed the art of paying with a good grace, and without diminishing the respectability of the person receiving, is little understood, and is that in which the system of relieving the poor is chiefly deficient. If any one of the members of that committee would put himself for a moment in the place of an officer harassed by some of their thousand orders, he will very well understand the sort of diminution of comfort and respectability which is thereby effected in all public offices; he will feel that the expedience of inquiry is, like most of the questions on which human opinion is divided, a question of degree;

the guards and checks which the occasional activity of Reformers has devised. During the last twelve years, little less than 100,000*l.* has been voted every year to make up the deficiency of the Fee Fund,—the Custom House, where the amount is probably greater than in all the public offices, not being included.—1830.

and he will perceive that when inquiry becomes permanent, instead of occasional, no man who values respectability can be expected to undergo the disgrace which will be unavoidably attached to the service of the public. Those of the committee who see these consequences, must dread this natural and inevitable result of their own labours as the greatest misfortune which could happen to the public, for whose sake, and to whose benefit, those labours are intended.

It must not be suspected that any personal motive lurks under that zeal for the public good, by which the economists and their committee are actuated ; . . that the exercise of ' a little brief authority ' can be an inducement to them to prolong their labours ; . . that the malignity which certain philosophers have supposed to be natural to man, but which is usually stifled in the intercourse of civilized society, may unexpectedly and unconsciously be revived and quickened into full activity under the appearance of pure patriotism ; still less is it to be imagined that any member of this party can condescend to ' court filthy popularity,' by aiding and authorising the unfounded clamours of the vulgar against all the servants of the public. But, however pure their patriotism may be, and however good their intentions, the end which they propose is insignificant, and the means by which they proceed pitiful and mischievous. These are not the reforms whereby states are to be strengthened or preserved ! No good can ever be effected by appealing to evil passions. He who would benefit his country, instead of fostering the discontent of the public and pimping for their suspicions, should

address their generous feelings, encourage their national spirit, and exalt their hopes. The methods of reform, by which great and effectual good may be accomplished, are these. Institute parochial schools for training up the people in the way they should go, and not only will crimes then become less frequent, but the poor-rates also will soon be diminished ; extend your system of colonization, as the wisest people of antiquity did ; restless spirits will then find their proper sphere abroad, and sufficient employment will be left for all at home. Establish the principle of limited service in your fleets and armies, and make the reward of service adequate and certain ; volunteers will then never be wanting. Carry on the war with all the heart, and all the soul, and all the strength of this mighty empire ; you will then beat down the power of France ; and then, . . and not till then, . . the public burdens may be lessened.

ESSAY IV.

ON

THE STATE OF THE POOR,
THE PRINCIPLE OF MR. MALTHUS'S
ESSAY ON POPULATION,

AND

THE MANUFACTURING SYSTEM.

1812.



ESSAY IV.

ON THE STATE OF THE POOR,

&c. &c.

THE commencement of the present century was distinguished in this country by two measures of prime importance; the population of Great Britain was then for the first time ascertained, and this was followed by an official inquiry into the state of the poor. The population was found to be 10,942,646. The number of persons receiving parish relief amounted to 734,817; those who received occasional relief from the poor rates were 305,899; and the vagrants who obtained assistance appeared to be 194,052*: a frightful proportion of paupers! The first result taught us our strength, the second discovered our weakness. When we knew that there were in Great Britain alone more than 2,700,000 men capable of defending their country, it became apparent that we might defy the world in arms; but the fact, that

* Here is an unavoidable ambiguity in this statement. Relief had thus often been given, but it by no means follows that it had been given to so many different persons. If one of these vagabonds cheats 19 parishes per annum, 10,000 of them would appear 190,000 in the enumeration.

nearly one person in nine of the whole population was dependent upon parochial aid, made it but too evident that there was something rotten in our internal policy.

Formidable, however, as this official and authentic statement must necessarily appear to every reflecting mind, it by no means represents the whole evil. The proportion of persons who are unable to maintain themselves, and therefore rely upon the contributions of the community for support, may, perhaps, be as great in some other countries, and yet in those countries there would not be the same degree of danger to the state. For, in England, the great mass of the manufacturing populace, whatever be their wages, live, as the phrase is, from hand to mouth, and make no provision for the morrow, . . . being utterly improvident, because their moral and religious education has been utterly neglected. The number of paupers, therefore, which elsewhere is stationary, or increases only in proportion to the increase of the other classes of society, is here at all times liable to a sudden and perilous augmentation, from the effects of an unfavourable season, in a climate where the seasons are peculiarly precarious; from the fluctuations of politics affecting a people, to whom foreign commerce has become of too much importance; and even from the caprice of fashion, in a country where thousands of families are dependent for daily bread upon the taste for silks or stuffs, ribands and buttons, and buckles. Formerly, indeed, these things seldom produced any farther evil than that of a few riots upon market days in times of scarcity. But the same accident,

which to a healthy subject would occasion only a slight and temporary inconvenience, scarcely felt at the moment, and drawing no ill consequences after it, will produce gangrene or cancer in a system that is morbidly predisposed; and certain it is, that in these our days a morbid change has been wrought in the great body of the populace. How this state of things has been produced; what is the real condition of the poor, what means have been taken for meliorating it, and what remains to be done, towards counteracting the danger with which social order otherwise is threatened, are topics that deserve the most serious consideration.

Every one has his reason ready for the increase of the poor, from the youngest tyro in the art of talking, to the most celebrated proficient in political quackery. Mr. Whitbread, and the pamphleteers and essayists of a shallow school, ascribe it to the war. Mr. Brougham imputes it more specifically to the Orders in Council, but joins in the sweeping cause, and agrees in prescribing the deadly narcotic of submission, under the name of peace. Sir Francis Burdett charges it upon the borough-mongers, and would purify the constitution from all its corruptions, by salivating it with his *pilula salutaria* of reform. Some of his partisans believe it a desperate case of king's evil, and long to have the knife and the actual cautery called in. But all those politicians who make any pretensions to philosophy, however they may insist upon these alleged causes for party or electioneering purposes, agree in their admiration of, what they are

pleased to call, a discovery in political science ; that great modern philosopher, Mr. Malthus, having made it appear to their satisfaction, that the primary source of the evil, the *causa causans*, lies in the system of nature ; and that a great error has been committed in the physical constitution of the universe, inasmuch as men multiply too fast, and therefore the land is overstocked.

The cause of the increase of the poor, which the said 'eminent philosopher,' as Mr. Whitbread denominates him, has assigned, and the remedy by which he proposes to counteract it, are both summary enough in themselves, though in their details they have been expanded into what, to borrow a trans-atlantic term, may truly be called a *lengthy* work. Mediocrity in literature has a better chance in later times, than it seems to have had in the age of Horace ; whatever the gods may think of it, gentlemen and ladies now give it a willing welcome, and it meets with due encouragement from booksellers. There is even a sort of insipidity which seems as well suited to a weak intellect, as panada and calves' feet to a debilitated stomach. But Mr. Malthus had other recommendations besides that of writing *at par* ; his philosophy was upon a level with the feelings and morality of his admirers, as well as with their understandings ; and by a happy combination of qualities, it equally suited the timid and well-meaning sons of the feeble who dreaded anything like change even in old abuses ; the bold spirits, who fancied that the world might have been much better constituted if their opinions had been asked

concerning it; and the lady metaphysicians, who discuss the fitness of things at their *conversazioni*; the shallow, the selfish, the sensual, and the vain.

Rubbish as Mr. Malthus's system is, it stands in the way of an inquiry into the state of the poor, and must be cleared away. The complaint that the land is overstocked, is indeed as old in this country as the Reformation. 'Some,' says Harrison, 'do grudge at the great increase of people ' in these days, thinking a necessary brood of ' cattle far better than a superfluous augmentation ' of mankind. But I can liken such men best of ' all unto the Pope and the Devil, who practise the ' hindrance of the furniture of the number of ' the elect to their uttermost. But if it should ' come to pass, that any foreign invasion should ' be made, (which the Lord God forbid for ' his mercies sake!) then should these men find, ' that a wall of men is far better than stacks of ' corn and bags of money, and complain of the ' want when it is too late to seek remedy.' An opinion of this kind is too foolish, as well as too wicked, ever to become permanently prevalent; the temporary reputation which Mr. Malthus obtained by renewing it is disgraceful to the age, and cannot be excused, though it may be accounted for by the circumstances of the times, and the occasion upon which his system was brought forward.

It has been the consolation of good men, when they contemplated the miseries which man brings upon man, to think, that many of the evils, moral as well as physical, which afflict society, are remediable, and will gradually disappear, as the human race advances in improvement: they hoped that

wisdom would be progressive with knowledge, and virtue with wisdom, and happiness with virtue: they formed this hope as they reasoned from the past to the future, and christianity made it a part of their faith. But the French revolution, acting upon political enthusiasm as the Reformation had done, three centuries before, upon that of a religious character, produced a set of speculators as wild as the old fifth-monarchy-men. They announced the advent of a political millennium, . . which was to be not the kingdom of the saints, . . saints and kingdoms being with them alike out of fashion, . . but the commonwealth of philosophers. Ploughs were to work of themselves, butter to grow upon trees, and man to live for ever in this world, . . a very necessary improvement this upon the former state of things; for according to their belief, if he were unphilosophical enough to die, he could not expect to live in any other. These notions were connected with the deplorable doctrines of brute materialism, blind necessity and blank atheism; and with a system of ethics, which, attempting an impossible union between stoicism and sensuality, succeeded just so far as to deprave the morals and harden the heart. Mr. Godwin was the master of this school. He had confounded together all principles pure and impure; he had diluted the wisdom of the ancients with his own errors and crudities; he had kneaded up their wheat, and barley, and millet with his own *album græcum*; and this precious wafer was to be swallowed as the bread of life, . . the sacrament of philosophy!

Against this Goliath of the *philosophistical Canaanites*, Mr. Malthus stepped forth, at a time when

the *mirage* in which Goliath had made his appearance was pretty well dispersed, and had left him in his natural dimensions, an ordinary Philistine of about five feet six. Mr. Malthus attacked him with an argument which had been long before clearly and distinctly stated by Wallace and Townsend, and which in fact no person who ever speculated upon an improved state of society could by possibility have overlooked. The sum of this argument is, that, supposing a country to be fully peopled, men must multiply faster than food can be multiplied for them. Mr. Malthus puts this proposition in a technical form, and improves upon it by endeavouring to shew that population increases in a geometrical series, but food only in an arithmetical one; this is held up as a discovery in political economy, and this is in reality the first of his fallacies, the fundamental sophism of his book. That which, if in itself true, could be applicable only if the whole earth were fully peopled and fully cultivated, he assumes to be universally true and applicable at the present time. Admitting then the possibility of Mr. Godwin's scheme of society, he supposes a pure state of philosophical equality to be established, all causes of vice and misery having been removed; . . but in one generation, he contends, the principle of population would disturb this state of happiness, and, in a second, destroy it. The absurdity of supposing that a community, which, according to the hypothesis, had attained the highest state of attainable perfection, should yet be without the virtue of continence, was overlooked by Mr. Malthus; he reasoned as if lust and hunger were

alike passions of physical necessity, and the one equally with the other, independent of the reason and the will : and this was the pervading principle of a book written in the vulgar tongue, and sent into the world for the edification of all dabblers in metaphysics, male and female ! One might have thought that such an argument could never have been advanced by one ' of woman born ; ' . . . that it could never have been heard without indignation by one who had a wife, a sister, or a daughter. But upon this his whole argument against Mr. Godwin rests ! And, as if to shew how happily these rival writers were matched against each other, the arch-philosophicide admitted it in reply, and proposed abortion and exposure as the remedies which, in his Utopia, must be adopted to counteract the power of population !

The direct object of Mr. Malthus's essay in its original form, was to confute the opinions of Mr. Godwin in particular, and of all those persons in general, who believed that any material improvement in human society might be effected ; and this object was thus accomplished by means of a technical sophism, and a physical assumption, as false in philosophy as it is detestable in morals. The essay, however, in this state, was consistent with itself. But the author, being a person of decorous life and habits, and moreover a Christian and a clergyman, began to suspect that, to deny the existence of such a virtue as continence, was neither compatible with the well-being of the community in which he lived, nor *with public decency*, . . . nor, setting these consider-

ations aside, with facts which necessarily fall within the sphere of every man's knowledge. In his second edition, therefore, he recognized the existence of this virtue, admitting, in express terms, that 'moral restraint,' or in other words, sexual continence, is 'a virtue clearly dictated by 'the light of nature, and expressly enjoined by 'revealed religion:' and with an inconsistency which it would be difficult to parallel, retaining all his arguments against Mr. Godwin in the beginning of the book, he proposes a scheme at the end for abolishing the poor rates by means of this very virtue, upon the denial of which the whole of his preceding argument is founded! Thus the latter part of his essay confutes the former, and he perishes by a stupid suicide, like the scorpion who strikes his tail into his own head.

It is this scheme, with its accompanying doctrine, which rendered it necessary to recur to Mr. Malthus on this occasion; for if the doctrine were true, it would be hopeless to seek for any alleviation of existing misery. The certain and speedy consequence of his remedy will soon be pointed out. We are overstocked with people, he says, and not only are so at present, but always have been, and always must be so. 'In every 'age, and in every state in which man has existed, 'or does now exist, the increase of population is 'necessarily limited by the means of subsistence.' 'The power of population is so superior to the 'power in the earth to produce subsistence for 'man, that, unless arrested by preventive checks, 'premature death must in some shape or other 'visit the human race. The vices of mankind

' are active and able ministers of depopulation. ' They are the precursors in the great army of ' destruction, and often finish the dreadful work ' themselves. But should they fail in their war ' of extermination, sickly seasons, epidemics, pestilence and plagues, advance in terrific array, and ' sweep off their thousands and ten thousands. ' Should success be still incomplete, gigantic inevitable famine stalks in the rear, and with one ' mighty blow levels the population with the food ' of the world.' The checks which keep the population down to the level of the means of subsistence are moral restraint, vice, and misery, and ' the truth is, that though human institutions appear ' to be the obvious and obtrusive causes of much ' mischief to mankind, they are, in reality, light ' and superficial in comparison with those deeper-rooted causes of evil which result from the laws ' of nature.' According, therefore, to Mr. Whitbread's ' eminent philosopher,' all the existing plagues of the world, war, pestilence, misery, and vice, in all its forms, are necessary, as preventive checks to counteract the principle of population ; . . a new mode of proving the necessity and utility of evil, with the comfortable corollary that it is in its nature irremediable! Thus does he attribute to an evil God, or to a necessity more powerful than a good One, all those miseries which are the effects of the weakness and the folly, and the ignorance and the errors, and the wickedness of man.

There are, indeed, some persons who may be disposed to demur at Mr. Malthus's theory, remembering that it is written in the Book of *Genesis*, ' So God created man in his own image,

‘ in the image of God created he him ; male and
 ‘ female created he them : And God blessed them,
 ‘ and God said unto them, Be fruitful and mul-
 ‘ tiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.’
 Such persons might be inclined to believe, that
 till the earth shall have been, in obedience to this
 command, replenished and subdued, if in any part
 of it production is not made to keep pace with po-
 pulation, the cause is to be ascribed to the errors
 or defects of human policy, and not to any inhe-
 rent evil in the laws of nature. [Not so Mr. Malthus
 He proves at great length, what never was denied
 or doubted, that in all ages and in all states of so-
 ciety men have suffered and are suffering from ig-
 norance, filth, famine, diseases, large cities, unwhole-
 some employments, superstition, bad passions, bad
 habits, bad laws, and bad governments ; and that
 some or other of these causes have everywhere and
 at all times checked population, and still continue
 to check it. ‘The period,’ he says, (meaning the
 time) ‘when the number of men surpass their
 ‘ means of subsistence has long since arrived, and
 ‘ this constantly subsisting cause of periodical mi-
 ‘ sery has existed ever since we have had any his-
 ‘ tories of mankind, does exist at present, and will
 ‘ for ever continue to exist, *unless some decided*
 ‘ *change take place in the physical constitution of*
 ‘ *our nature.*’

In New Holland, where there does not exist a
 man to a square mile, the number of men exceeds
 their means of subsistence. Be it so. The cli-
 mate is good, the soil fertile, the sun shines there,
 the rains and the dews descend ; let but the seed
 be sown, and earth is ready to give its in-

crease. What is required to remedy the evil there, and to make the natives multiply as rapidly as the Anglo-Americans, . . . a change in the physical constitution of their nature, or in their moral condition? Let us come home with the argument. In England the inhabitants might be multiplied to tenfold their present number, and the island still produce enough for the comfortable subsistence of all; yet in England a great part of the people are in want, population is checked, and every profession, trade, and calling, whereby man or woman can earn support, is overstocked. But there is room in the land; . . . scarcely any part of the country is cultivated to the highest point, and great part of it is lying idle. And if the land were full, and every acre husbanded like the garden-grounds of Flanders, there is the sea before us, and the way open to Canada, to South Africa, to Australia. Where lies the fault, if New Holland be not as fully peopled in proportion as England; if England be not as fully peopled in proportion as the Low Countries, or as China; if China be not peopled in the fullest proportion, not to its actual, but to its possible powers of production? Is it in human institutions, or in the laws of nature? Is it in man, or in God? Are we to complain of ourselves, or of our Creator? For this is the alternative, . . . and let not the impiety of the question be imputed to him who asks it in this place. 'Wilt thou condemn me that thou mayest be righteous?' saith the Lord; will any one who believes in that Lord answer the question in Mr. Malthus's behalf? If a country be over-peopled, and *crowded* and distressed in regard to its system of

society, before it be half peopled in proportion to its extent and its power of production, the fault lies in that system of society, not in the system of nature. If, while not a tenth, nay, not an hundredth part of the habitable world be cultivated, mankind be everywhere in want, the cause exists in their own errors. Till the whole earth be peopled to its utmost capacity, it is the fault of man if any check to population exist, except such as are dispensed by the elements and the operations of physical nature. All other impediments, till the power of production can be pushed no farther, and actual room for farther increase be wanting, must be attributed to error and ignorance in man, not to unerring nature and Omniscient Goodness; . . and all that Mr. Malthus has done, is but to prove that radical error in society, which his whole work is designed to palliate and excuse.

But the Malthusians observe, in reply to such objections, that the new discovery is matter of science, and that religious argument cannot be permitted to stand in the way of a demonstration. I myself heard one of these reasoners affirm, in answer to an assertion that this theory was inconsistent with the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, . . that if the two things were incompatible the consequence could not be avoided; the argument of the geometrical and arithmetical series was a demonstration, and Divine Providence must go to the wall! But there is a moral *reductio ad absurdum* which the man of enlightened piety feels to be demonstrative wherever it applies: he knows in his heart that whatever opinion is wholly and flagrantly in-

consistent with the goodness of creating and preserving wisdom, must necessarily be false; and in this knowledge he cannot be deceived, for it is the voice of God within him which tells him so.

In reality, what is true in Mr. Malthus's book is not applicable, and what is applicable is not true. It is true that the whole earth may be fully peopled to its utmost power of production, so as to admit of no farther increase; but this truth is as worthless as a *jus merum* in law, and admits of no possible application. The argument that, if the world were thus peopled, it could not continue so, because mankind, though in the highest conceivable state of perfection, would be incapable of restraining the sexual passion, that being an appetite of irresistible physical necessity, might be applicable a few millenniums hence, if it were true; but the position upon which it rests is false. He has played off his positive check and his preventive check, but they have not saved him from this check-mate.

So much for the great discovery in political science! But these absurdities are far exceeded by the application which Mr. Malthus makes of moral restraint, after he has luckily recollected that such a virtue is in existence. He proposes, by means of this virtue, to put a salutary stop to the increase of the poor, and abolish the poor rates. The plan for this, to which he says he can see no material objection, is thus stated in his own words.

‘ I should propose a regulation to be made,
‘ declaring that no child born from any marriage,
‘ taking place after the expiration of a year from

‘ the date of the law, and no illegitimate child
‘ born two years from the same date, should ever
‘ be entitled to parish assistance. And to give a
‘ more general knowledge of the law, and to en-
‘ force it more strongly on the minds of the lower
‘ classes of people, the clergyman of each parish
‘ should, previously to the solemnization of a mar-
‘ riage, read a short address to the parties, stating
‘ the strong obligation on every man to support
‘ his own children ; the impropriety and even
‘ immorality of marrying without a fair prospect
‘ of being able to do this ; the evils which had
‘ resulted to the poor themselves from the attempt
‘ which had been made to assist, by public institu-
‘ tions, in a duty which ought to be exclusively
‘ appropriated to parents ; and the absolute ne-
‘ cessity which had at length appeared of aban-
‘ doning all such institutions, on account of their
‘ producing effects opposite to those which were
‘ intended. After the public notice which I have
‘ proposed had been given, and the system of
‘ poor laws had ceased with regard to the rising
‘ generation, if any man chose to marry without
‘ a prospect of being able to support a family, he
‘ should have the most perfect liberty so to do.
‘ Though to marry in this case is, in my opinion,
‘ clearly an immoral act, yet it is not one which
‘ society can justly take upon itself to prevent or
‘ punish ; because the punishment provided for it
‘ by the laws of nature falls directly and most
‘ severely upon the individual who commits the
‘ act, and, through him, only more remotely and
‘ feebly on the society. When nature will govern
‘ and punish for us, it is a very miserable ambition

‘ to wish to snatch the rod from her hands, and
‘ draw upon ourselves the odium of executioners.
‘ To the punishment of nature, therefore, he should
‘ be left—the punishment of severe want. He
‘ has erred in the face of a most clear and precise
‘ warning, and can have no just reason to com-
‘ plain of any person but himself, when he feels the
‘ consequence of his error. All parish assistance
‘ should be most rigidly denied him ; and if the
‘ hand of private charity be stretched forth in his
‘ relief, the interests of humanity imperiously re-
‘ quire that it should be administered very spar-
‘ ingly. He should be taught to know that the
‘ laws of nature, which are the laws of God, had
‘ doomed him and his family to starve for dis-
‘ obeying their repeated admonitions ; that he had
‘ no claim of right on society for the smallest por-
‘ tion of food beyond that which his labour would
‘ fairly purchase. With regard to illegitimate
‘ children, after the proper notice had been given,
‘ they should on no account whatever be allowed
‘ to have any claim to parish assistance. If the
‘ parents desert their child they ought to be made
‘ answerable for the crime. The infant is, com-
‘ paratively speaking, of no value to the society,
‘ as others will immediately supply its place. Its
‘ principal value is on account of its being the
‘ object of one of the most delightful passions in
‘ human nature—parental affection. But if this
‘ value be disregarded by those who are alone in
‘ a capacity to feel it, the society cannot be called
‘ upon to put itself in their place, and has no
‘ farther business in its protection, than in the
‘ case of its murder, or intentional ill-treatment,

‘to follow the general rules in punishing such crimes; which rules, for the interests of morality, it is bound to pursue, whether the object, in this particular instance, be of value to the state or not.’

Thus, then, this ‘eminent philosopher,’ who, at the beginning of his book, argues that it is in vain to hope for an improved state of society, because men, in the highest imaginable state of wisdom and virtue, would continue to breed, regardless of all consequences, tells us, at the end of this very book, that the way to reduce our poor rates is to persuade the lower orders to continence while they are in their present state of deplorable ignorance; to discourage them, as much as possible, from marrying; to preach wedding sermons to them, if they will marry, upon the immorality of breeding, . . . that being a luxury reserved only for those who can afford it; and if they will persist in so improper and immoral a practice, after so solemn and well-timed a warning, to leave them to the punishment of severe want, and rigidly deny all parish assistance. His remedy for the existing evils of society in this kingdom is simply to abolish the poor rates, and starve the poor into celibacy. That moral restraint which, according to his own argument, might, if it were practised, render an Utopian system of government possible and permanent, he expects and demands from the existing race of poor. The exercise of that virtue, which, as he had reasoned, would not exist among a people in the highest state of moral and intellectual cultivation, he expects and demands from the ignorant, degraded, brutalized, miserable poor

people of England. No public relief is to be given to the starving infant ; it is worth nothing to society, for its place will be presently supplied, and society, therefore, has no farther business than to hang the mother if she should shorten the sufferings of her babe rather than see it die of want... A plan for the abolition of the poor-rates as practicable as it is humane ! The rich are to be called upon for no sacrifices ; nothing more is required of them than that they should harden their hearts. They have found a place at the table of nature, and why should they be disturbed at their feast ? It is Mr. Malthus's own metaphor ; and that we may not be suspected of misrepresenting the spirit in which his system is recommended, the illustration shall be presented in his own language.

‘ A man,’ he says, ‘ who is born into a world
‘ already possessed, if he cannot get subsistence
‘ from his parents, on whom he has a just demand, and if the society does not want his labour,
‘ has no claim of right to the smallest portion of
‘ food, and, in fact, has no business to be where
‘ he is. At nature’s mighty feast there is no cover
‘ for him. She tells him to be gone, and will
‘ quickly execute her own orders, if he do not
‘ work upon the compassion of some of her
‘ guests. If these guests get up and make room
‘ for him, other intruders immediately appear demanding the same favour. The report of a provision for all that come fills the hall with numerous claimants. The order and harmony of the
‘ feast is disturbed ; the plenty that before reigned
‘ is changed into scarcity ; and the happiness of

‘ the guests is destroyed by the spectacle of misery
‘ and dependence in every part of the hall, and by
‘ the clamorous importunity of those who are
‘ justly enraged at not finding the provision which
‘ they had been taught to expect. The guests
‘ learn too late their error, in counteracting those
‘ strict orders to all intruders issued by the great
‘ mistress of the feast, who, wishing that all her
‘ guests should have plenty, and knowing that she
‘ could not provide for unlimited numbers, hu-
‘ manely refused to admit fresh comers when her
‘ table was already full.’

A writer ought to possess a more logical mind than Mr. Malthus has been gifted with, before he ventures to reason in metaphors and similitudes. But it were idle to dwell upon flaws of reasoning in a passage where, at the first perusal, every reader, whose heart and understanding are in their natural state, will see nothing but naked deformity. There is, however, no accounting for tastes physical or metaphysical, and there are certain intellects which seem to have an appetite, like the Hottentots, for garbage. One person is said to have been so smitten with Mr. Malthus's theory, that he intended to bring a bill into parliament for abolishing the poor rates upon the plan thus recommended and thus illustrated. While such a plan remains upon paper it is as harmless in the written letter as the receipt for Sir Humphry Davy's new fulminating powder; but if either the one or the other be made the subject of experiment, woe be to all within reach of the explosion! The numerous claimants at Mr. Malthus's feast of nature, who, as he tells us, have

‘ no right to the smallest portion of food, and, ‘ in fact, no business to be there,’ would very soon begin to ask the luckier guests what better title they themselves could produce, and resort to the right of the strongest. ‘ You have had your ‘ turn at the table long enough, gentlemen,’ they would say, ‘ and if those who have no places are ‘ to starve, we will have a scramble for it at least!’ Let any man, in his senses, ask himself whether this would not be the natural, inevitable, and proper consequence; . . whether, in the present state of society in this country, such a plan as that of Mr. Malthus could, by any possibility, be carried into effect without producing all the horrors of a *bellum servile*; . . whether the legislators who should pass such an act would not be pulled in pieces by an infuriated and desperate populace, . . and whether such legislators would not deserve their fate!

When Berkeley, in the *Querist*, asked ‘ Whether the *number* and welfare of the subjects be ‘ not the true strength of the crown? Whether a ‘ country inhabited by people well fed, clothed, and ‘ lodged, would not become every day more populous; and whether a numerous stock of people, ‘ in such circumstances, would not constitute a ‘ flourishing nation?’ . . And ‘ whether to provide ‘ plentifully for the poor be not feeding the root, ‘ the substance whereof will shoot upwards into ‘ the branches, and cause the top to flourish?’ he did not propose these questions as points which he conceived would ever be disputed. That wise and excellent man believed, as all wise men had done before him, that the strength of kingdoms con-

sisted mainly in the *number* of their inhabitants, and that the true policy of governments is not to prevent their subjects from multiplying, but to provide uses and employment for them as fast as they multiply. If in any country they increase faster than means, not merely for their existence, but for their well-being, are provided, in that country there is a defect of policy; the error is in human institutions, not in the unerring laws of nature; . . in man, not in his Maker.

That this is the case in England is manifest in the number of poor and the amount of the poor-rates*. Certain it is that the poor have rapidly increased, and are increasing; and the chief causes of this increase render their physical and moral condition worse at present than it has been at any former time since the shock of the Reformation subsided.

In the political, as in the natural body, it seems as if those important transitions in the system, which are necessary to its developement, could not be performed without some degree of suffering or of danger. Mendicity followed the abolition of vassalage in Europe. Feudal times afford tempting themes for the romancer and the poet. The high-minded and generous lord; the high-born and gentle lady; the servants who were, as in some countries is still expressed in their name long after the reality has ceased, *children of the*

* The parish rates of 1803 were 5,318,000*l.* of which 4,267,000*l.* were expended on the poor. The rack-rental of England in that year was about forty millions; it is now nearly fifty-five, and the poor-rates will probably be found to have at least kept pace with this increase when the returns shall be made next year pursuant to an act passed in the last session.

house ; seeming to be humble members of the same family rather than dependents ; the baronial hall ; the seasons of festival, and the every-day hospitality ; these are materials from which imagination may build up an ideal state of happiness not less delightful than fabled Arcadia, and of a loftier character. From a state of perfect vassalage, whether feudal or commercial, mendicity and want are of course excluded ; hence the advocates of the slave trade draw one of their favourite arguments ; and thus it is to be explained how good men, like Mr. Tobin and Bryan Edwards, should have written in defence of that abominable traffic, feeling as much indignation against the abolitionists as the abolitionists against all who protracted the consummation so devoutly to be wished for, to which they were pressing on. These writers knew that, in their hands, power over their slaves was but the means of beneficence. But Hodge and Huggins, and the black code of our own, as well as of the French islands, furnish the same proof against their opinion as the feudal laws of every country afford of the cruelty and oppression of the feudal system.

By abolishing that system in the countries which he has subjected, and by necessitating its abolishment in others, Buonaparte, incarnate fiend as he is, insatiable of blood, and delighting in the infliction of misery, has been made to produce good amid the evil which will consign him to execration in this world, and for which he will have a dreadful account to render in the next. This country would not now have been great and happy if the yoke of bondage had not long ago been broken

here : but, in the transition which the lower classes made from the state of villeins to that of free labourers, an extent of immediate evil was produced of which the unexaggerated* statement might almost startle our belief. The Reformation aggravated that evil, not only by depriving the poor of that eleemosynary support which the monasteries afforded when there was no other constant source of relief, but because men who shared the

* It seems probable that there has been some exaggeration. Hume, on the authority of an act passed 1512, says, that the number of prisoners for debt in the different gaols in the kingdom exceeded 60,000; but Sir F. Morton Eden, with good reason, doubts whether the words of the act warrant any such construction; they are as he gives them:—'Where (whereas) the workers and makers of caps and hats, within this realme of England, have daily occupied and set on worke in making of caps and hats of the king's natural subjects, that is to say, men, women, maidens, and children (borne within this realme of England), to the great reliefe and comforte of poor prisoners within this realme, to the number of threescore thousand persons and above, in carding, spinning, &c.—Rastell's Statutes, i. 407. Hume was a careless writer in matters of fact, and the construction which he has given to this passage is one proof of his carelessness. But Sir Morton Eden himself seems to rely too implicitly upon Harrison's belief, rather than assertion, that Henry VIII., in the course of his reign, hung up 'threescore and twelve thousand great thieves, petty thieves, and rogues;' for Harrison makes this statement upon the authority of Cardan, and tells us that 'Cardane writeth it upon the report of the Bishop of Lexovia.' It would require something better than these authorities, far fetched and little worth, to establish so monstrous a fact. Justice had certainly not relaxed when Harrison himself wrote, and he states the annual consumption of the gallows in his time at a loose average of from three to four hundred, evidently with no disposition to under-estimate the amount.

Of Sir Morton Eden's three volumes upon the state of the poor, nearly two might well have been spared; but it is a work for which the public are indebted to him, and the early death of the author may be regarded as a national loss. Few men in his station have applied themselves with such meritorious industry to useful pursuits.

plunder of the church in the lavish distribution of its spoils, became hard landlords; and the rents of the abbey tenants were heavily raised, in consequence of the same act which destroyed the chief market for their produce. Never was there a good work so wickedly effected as the Reformation in England. It is at once our chief blessing and our foulest reproach.

These circumstances aggravated the evil; but the decrease of villeinage was its cause. 'Manufactures,' says Sir Morton Eden, 'by creating a necessity for free hands, and, consequently, enabling men to make use of the most valuable of all property, their own industry, subjected those who were any ways incapacitated from availing themselves of that fund, to the miserable alternative of starving independently;' and he states it as an inevitable conclusion from his inquiries, that manufactures and commerce are the true parents of our national poor. Had the price of labour, when it first became a marketable commodity, found its proper standard, so that the labourer in youth and health might have been enabled to make provision for sickness and old age, this consequence would not have followed; but we must not blame our ancestors for not having discovered with prospective wisdom, as the means of prevention, what we ourselves, after so long and heavy an experience of the evil, have not yet adopted as the cure. It was mitigated at first by the spirit of adventure, then more prevalent among the lower classes than now. Harrison speaks of emigrants to 'France, Germany, Barbary, India, Muscovia, and very Calicut;' and shortly after-

wards our colonies in North America were established. And though, when labour is underpaid and the labouring classes are kept poor, poverty must always be upon the increase, the increase was less rapid than in later times, because of the flourishing state of the country (whose progress seems scarcely to have sustained any interruption by the civil wars of Charles I.),...because the virtues of the feudal system survived that system for a while,...and because the manners of the peasantry were not yet corrupted.

Harrison states the number* of vagabonds in

* The passage is a very curious one. 'It is not yet full three score years since this trade began, but how it hath prospered since that time it is easy to judge, for they are now supposed, of one sex and another, to amount unto above 10,000 persons, as I have heard reported. Moreover, in counterfeiting the Egyptian rogues, they have devised a language among themselves, which they name *canting*, but others pedlars' French; a speech compact thirty years since of English, and a great number of odd words of their own devising, without all order or reason; and yet such is it as none but themselves are able to understand. The first deviser thereof was hanged by the neck—a just reward, no doubt, for his deserts, and a common end to all of that profession. A gentleman also of late (Thomas (a) Harman) hath taken great pains to search out the secret practices of this ungracious rabble. And among other things he setteth down and describeth three-and-twenty sorts of them, whose names it shall not be amiss to remember, whereby each one may take occasion to read and know also by his industry what wicked people they are, and what villainy remaineth in them.

* *The several Dis-orders and Degrees amongst our idle Vagabonds.*

* 1. Rufflers.

* 5. Wild Roges.

* 2. Uprightmen.

* 6. Priggers, or Pransers.

* 3. Hookers, or anglers.

* 7. Palliards.

* 4. Roges.

* 8. Fraters.

(a) Probably 'Mr. Harman, a Warwickshire gentleman,' who is mentioned in Stanley's Remedy. |

his time, upon a rude estimate, at above 10,000. This is, perhaps, short of the number ; . . there is a document in Strype, which affirms that there were at least three or four hundred able-bodied vagabonds in every county, who lived by theft and rapine, and who sometimes met in troops to the number of sixty, and committed spoil on the inhabitants. It adds, that if all the felons of this kind were reduced to good subjection, they would form a strong army ; and that the magistrates were awed by their association and threats from enforcing the laws against them. But in Scotland, a century later, the evil was ten or twenty fold greater ; . . for, during that century, Scotland had been stationary, if not retrograde, and the people were in as savage a state as even the worst of the wild Irish at the present day. Fletcher, of Saltoun, gives a dreadful picture :

‘ There are, at this day,’ he says (1698), ‘ in Scotland, besides a great many poor families, very meanly provided for by the church-boxes (with others, who by living upon bad food fall into various diseases), two hundred thousand people begging from door to door. And, though the number of these be perhaps double to what

‘ 9. Abrams.

‘ 12. Drunken tinkers.

‘ 10. Freshwater mariners, or whipjacks,

‘ 13. Swadders, or pedlers.

‘ 11. Dummerers.

‘ 14. Jarkemen, or patrecoes.

‘ Of Women Kind.

‘ 1. Demanders for glimmar, or fire.

‘ 5. Walking mortes.

‘ 2. Baudie Baskets.

‘ 6. Doxes.

‘ 3. Mortes.

‘ 7. Delles.

‘ 4. Autem mortes,

‘ 8. Kinching mortes.

‘ 9. Kinching coves.’

‘ it was formerly, by reason of this present great
‘ distress, yet in all times there have been about
‘ one hundred thousand of those vagabonds, who
‘ have lived without any regard or subjection
‘ either to the laws of the land, or even those of
‘ God and nature ; fathers incestuously accompa-
‘ nying with their own daughters, the son with the
‘ mother, and the brother with the sister. No
‘ magistrate could ever discover, or be informed,
‘ which way one in a hundred of these wretches
‘ died, nor that ever they were baptized. Many
‘ murders have been discovered among them, and
‘ they are not only a most unspeakable oppression
‘ to poor tenants (who, if they give not bread, or
‘ some kind of provision to, perhaps, forty such vil-
‘ lains on one day, are sure to be insulted by them),
‘ but they rob many poor people who live in houses
‘ distant from any neighbourhood. In years of
‘ plenty many thousands of them meet together in
‘ the mountains, where they feast and riot for
‘ many days ; and at country weddings, markets,
‘ burials, and other the like public occasions, they
‘ are to be seen, both men and women, perpe-
‘ tually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting
‘ together.’

Fletcher was a lover of liberty, and a sincere one ; yet he seriously proposed, as a remedy for this evil, the re-establishment of domestic slavery, drawing arguments from the example of his favourite republics. A system of parochial education was shortly afterwards established in Scotland, and the result was, that Scotland, then one of the most barbarous countries in Christendom, became the most orderly. Provision had been intended

for securing a like advantage to the people of England by Edward VI., whose life, short as it was, is honourable to human nature; and whose accession ought to have been made a red-letter day in the English Kalendar, and set apart for pious and grateful commemoration, as long as the blessings which we have derived from it shall endure. *Monstrificus puellus* Cardan calls him for his attainments; and a Protestant, without superstition, may be allowed to call him 'blessed King Edward,' for his virtues. This spotless prince enumerates, among the remedies for the sores of the commonwealth, good education as the first in dignity and degree, and declared his purpose of 'showing his device therein.' 'This,' he said, 'shall well ease and remedy the deceitful working of things, disobedience of the lower sort, casting of seditious bills, and will clearly take away the idleness of people.'

Edward's early death was probably the greatest misfortune that England ever sustained. Elizabeth effected the work of reformation rather in the spirit of a politician, than with that sincere, and conscientious, and enlightened piety which directed and sanctified his conduct. The provision which was made for the religious education of the people was less extensive and less complete than he would have made it; and such as it was, the greater part of the parochial clergy were not qualified to give it effect. This was one of the evils which arose from the Reformation. From the commencement of that great revolution, divinity became a perilous profession: those studies which formerly led to honourable ease, benefices, and dig-

nities, led then to exile, imprisonment, and martyrdom; and thus, while the issue of the struggle was doubtful, the supply of students was materially diminished. The robberies (for they deserve no better name) which were committed upon church property, tended to the same effect. 'It would pity a man's heart,' says Latimer, 'to hear that I hear of the state of Cambridge. What it is in Oxford I cannot tell. There be few that study divinity, but so many as of necessity must furnish the colleges, for their livings be so small and victuals so dear, that they tarry not there, but go everywhere to seek livings, and so they go about. It will come to pass that we shall have nothing but a little English divinity, that will bring the realm into a very barbarousness, and utter decay of learning. It is not that, I wiss, that will keep out the supremacy of the Pope of Rome. There be none now but great men's sons in colleges, and their fathers look not to have them preachers...so every way the office of preaching is pinched at.'

There are few books which throw so much light upon the manners and morals of their age, and the whole state of society in those times, as Latimer's Sermons; they may be ranked among the most curious and amusing specimens of our early literature. 'My lords and masters,' says this plain and downright preacher, 'I say that all such proceedings, as far as I can perceive, do intend plainly to make the yeomanry *slavery*, and the clergy *shavery*. We of the clergy had too much, but this is taken away, and now we have too little. But for my own part I have no

' cause to complain, for I thank God and the king
 ' I have sufficient, and God is my judge I come
 ' not to crave of any man any thing; but I know
 ' them that have too little. There lieth a great
 ' matter by these appropriations; great reformation
 ' is to be had in them. I know where there
 ' is a great market town, with divers hamlets and
 ' inhabitants, where do rise yearly of their labours
 ' to the value of 50 pound: and the vicar that
 ' serveth (being so great a cure) hath but 12 or
 ' 14 marks by year; so that of this pension he is
 ' not able to buy him books, nor give his neighbours
 ' drink; and all the great gain goeth another
 ' way.' 'What an unreasonable devil is this!' exclaims
 the honest old bishop, on another occasion, making use of Satan in his * favourite way.

* As, for example, in his ' Sermon of the Plough, preached in the
 shroudes at St. Paules church, in London, the xvii day of January,
 1548.' He is touching upon the unfitness of giving secular employment
 to the bishops. ' A prelate hath a charge and cure otherwyse, and
 ' therefore he cannot discharge his dutie, and be a lord president too.
 ' For a presidentship requireth a whole man, and a byshop cannot be
 ' two men. A byshop hath his office, a flocke to teach, to look unto;
 ' and therefore he cannot meddle with another office, which alone re-
 ' quireth a whole man. Let the priest preach, and the noble man
 ' handle the temporal-matters. Moses was a marvellous man, a good
 ' man; Moses was a wonderful fellow, and did his dutie, being a mar-
 ' ried man: we lacke such as Moses was. Well, I would all men
 ' would look to their dutie, as God hath called them, and then we
 ' should have a flourishing Christian common weale. And now I
 ' would aske a strange question. Who is the most diligentest bishop and
 ' prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing his office? I
 ' can tell, for I know him who it is; I know him well. But now I
 ' think I see you listening and harkening that I should name him.
 ' There is one that passeth all the other, and is the most diligent pre-
 ' late and preacher in all Englande. And will ye know who it is? I
 ' will tell you. It is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all

‘ What an unreasonable devil is this ! He provides a great while before-hand for the time that

‘ other ; he is never out of his diocese ; he is never from his cure ; ye shall never fynde him unoccupied ; he is ever in his parish ; he keepeth residence at all times ; ye shall never find him out of the way ; call for him when you will, he is ever at home, the diligentest preacher in all the realme ; he is ever at his plough ; no lording or loytering can hynder him ; he is ever applying his busyness ; ye shall never fynde him idle I warrant you. And his office is to hinder religion, to mayntaine superstition, to set up idolatry, to teach all kynde of popery. He is ready as can be wished for to set forth his plough, to devise as many ways as can be to deface and obscure God’s glory. Where the devill is resident and hath his plough going, there away with books and up with candles ! away with bibles and up with beads ! away with the light of the gospel and up with the lights of candles, yea, at noon dayes. Where the devill is resident that he may prevayle, up with all supersticion and idolatry, sensing, paynting of images, candles, palmes, ashes, holy water, and new service of men’s inventing, as though man could invent a better way to honour God with, than God himself hath appoynted. Down with Christ’s cross, up with purgatory pick-purse, up with him, the popish purgatory I mean. Away with clothing the naked, the poor and impotent ; up with decking of images, and gay garnishing of stooks and stones. Up with man’s traditions and his lawes, down with God’s traditions and his most holy word. But here some man will say to me, ‘ What, Sir, are ye so privy of the devill’s counsell that ye know all this to be true ? ’ Truly, I know him too well, and have obeyed him a little too much in condescending to some follyes. And I know him as other men do ; yea, that he is ever occupied and ever busy in following his plough. I know by S. Peter, which sayth of him, *Sicut leo rugiens circuit quarens quem devoret*, he goeth about like a roaring lyon seeking whom he may devour. I would have this text well viewed and examined every word of it. *Circuit*, he goeth about in every corner of his dyocese. He goeth on visitation daily. He leaveth no place of his cure unvisited. He walketh round about from place to place and ceaseth not. *Sicut leo*, as a lyon ; that is, strongly, boldly and proudly, stately and fiercely, with haute lookes, with his proude countenances, with his stately bragginges. *Rugiens*, roaring ; for he letteth not slip any occasion to speake or to roare out when he seeth his tyme. *Quarens*, he goeth about seeking, and not sleeping as our bishops doe, but he seeketh diligently, he searcheth diligently all cor-

' is to come ; he hath brought up now of late the
 ' most monstrous kind of covetousness that ever
 ' was heard of ; he hath invented a fee-farming of
 ' benefices, and all to delay the office of preaching ;
 ' insomuch that when any man hereafter shall have
 ' a benefice, he may go where he will for any
 ' house he shall have to dwell upon, or any glebe
 ' land to keep hospitality withal ; but he must
 ' take up a chamber in an alehouse, and there sit
 ' and play at the tables all day.' ' The devil hath
 ' caused also there this monstrous kind of covet-
 ' ousness, patrons to sell their benefices ; yea
 ' more, he gets himself to the University, and
 ' causeth great men and esquires to send their
 ' sons thither, and put out poor scholars, that
 ' should be divines ; for their parents intend not
 ' that they should be preachers, but that they may
 ' have a show of learning.'

The consequence of this state of things was,
 that the parochial clergy, in the first ages of the
 Reformation, were scandalously ignorant, and

' ners, whereas he may have his prey. He rovethe abroad in every
 ' place of his dyocese, he standeth not still, he is never at rest, but
 ' ever in hand with his plough that it may go forward. But there was
 ' never such a preacher in England as he is. Who is able to tell his
 ' diligent preaching ? In the mean tyme the prelates take their plea-
 ' sures. They are lords and no labourers, but the devill is diligent at
 ' his plough. He is no unpreaching prelate. He is no lordly loyterer
 ' from his cure, but a busy plough-man, so that among all the prelates
 ' and all the pack of them that have cure, the devill shall go for my
 ' money. For he still applyeth his busyness. Therefore ye unpreach-
 ' ing prelates, learne of the devill to be diligent in doing of your office.
 ' Learne of the devill. An if you will not learne of God nor good men,
 ' for shame learne of the devill. *Ad erubescientiam vestram dico.* I
 ' speake it for your shame. If you will not learne of God nor good
 ' men to be diligent in your office, learne of the devill.'

their lives but too often as little edifying as their doctrine. 'Sad the times, in the beginning of 'Queen Elizabeth,' says Fuller*, 'when by her 'majesty's injunctions the clergy were commanded 'to read the chapters over once or twice by themselves, that so they might be the better enabled 'to read them distinctly in the congregation.' Augustin Bernhers, the editor of Latimer's Sermons, draws a melancholy picture of their condition.

'I will not,' he says, 'speak now of them that, 'being not content with lands and rents, do select 'into their hands spiritual livings, as parsonages 'and such like, and that under the pretence to 'make provision for their houses. What hurt and 'damage this realm of England doth sustain by 'that devilish kind of provision for gentlemen's 'houses, knights, and lords, houses, they can tell 'best that do travel in the countries, and see with 'their eyes great parishes and market towns, with 'innumerable others, to be utterly destitute of 'God's word; and that because that these greedy 'men have spoiled the livings, and gotten them 'into their hands, and instead of a faithful and 'painful teacher they have a Sir John, who hath 'better skill at playing at tables, or in keeping of 'a garden, than in God's word, and he for a trifle 'doth serve the cure, and so help to bring the 'people of God in danger of their souls.'

Latimer himself dwells upon this theme. 'It 'is a great charge,' he says, 'a great burthen 'before God to be a patron; for every patron, 'when he doth not diligently endeavour himself 'to place a good and godly man in his benefice

* Triple Reconciler, p. 82.

' which is in his hands, but is slothful, and careth
 ' not what manner of man he taketh ; or else is
 ' covetous and will have it himself, and hire a
 ' Sir John Lack Latin which shall say service, so
 ' that the people shall be nothing edified. .no
 ' doubt that patron shall make answer before God
 ' for not doing of his duty.'

This evil * continued till the struggle between

* George Wither, who, amidst all his prosing and prolixity, often delights the poet, and instructs the historian, has a passage in one of his satires which shows how prevalent the evil was in his time.

' We rob the church——

' Men seek not to impropriate a part

' Unto themselves, but they can find in heart

' To engross up all; which vile presumption

' Hath brought church-livings to a strange consumption :

' And if this strong disease do not abate,

' 'Twill be the poorest member in the state.

' No marvel, then, instead of learned preachers,

' We have been pestered with such simple teachers;

' Such poor, mute tongue-tied readers, as scarce know

' Whether that God made Adam first or no;

' Thence it proceeds, and there's the cause that place

' And office at this time incur disgrace;

' For men of judgements or good dispositions

' Scorn to be tied to any base conditions,

' Like to our hungry pedants, who'll engage

' Their souls for any curtailed vicarage.

' I say there's none of knowledge, wit, or merit,

' But such as are of a most servile spirit,

' That will so wrong the church as to presume

' Some poor half-demi-parsonage to assume,

' In name of all ; no, they had rather quite

' Be put beside the same than wrong God's right.

' Well, they must entertain such pedants then,

' Fitter to feed swine than the souls of men :

' But patrons think such best, for there's no fear

' They will speak any thing they loathe to hear ;

' They may run foolishly to their damnation,

' Without reproof or any disturbance ;

episcopacy and presbytery produced the same effect as the Reformation itself had done, of deterring men from a profession which was again become precarious and perilous. Baxter, in one of his works, where he very ably explains the causes of the increase of popery in his days, observes that most of our ministers were 'unable to deal with a cunning Jesuit or priest,... which,' he adds, 'is not to be wondered at, considering how many of them are very young men, put in of late in the necessity of the churches.' With the Restoration this evil ended; but that was not an age in which any means were likely to be taken for the moral and religious instruction of the people. The subsequent danger of the Protestant establishment under James produced nothing but good to the church as well as to the state; it occasioned a demand among the clergy for learning and talent, which was abundantly supplied: being forced into the field of controversy, they learnt the use of their weapons, and remained masters of it. From that time to the present, the character of the parochial clergy has continued to improve, and it has probably never been so respectable in any age, or in any country, as it is in England at this day.

But the want of a general system of parochial

- * To let them see their vice they may be bold,
- * And yet not stand in doubt to be controll'd.
- * Those in their houses may keep private schools,
- * And either serve for jesters or for fools:
- * And will suppose that they are highly graced,
- * Be they but at their patron's table placed;
- * And then if they be call'd but priests in scoff,
- * Straight they duck down, and all their caps come off.'

education has never been supplied. The funds with which it should have been established were scandalously dissipated at the beginning, when men were literally bribed to support the new establishment by the plunder of the old. A warfare of opinions and a state of religious anarchy for an hundred and thirty years was the price which we paid for a religious revolution; the evil has been abundantly overbalanced, but its effects have not yet ceased: the attachment of the peasantry to their roods and puppetries was broken, but no wiser attachment was substituted for it. The Romanists impressed their imaginations; the reformed clergy failed to impress their understandings. They plucked up the tares, but they were not equally diligent in sowing the good seed. In Catholic countries, the people are passionately attached to the faith of their fathers; while the higher classes, if they have any degree of knowledge, are either unbelievers, or at least indifferents. In England there is a great spirit of religion in the higher ranks, but the body of the people care little for the national church, and are easily won over from it. This difference between the two churches is striking, and as strikingly exemplifies the superior policy of the one as it does the truth of the other.

The character of the lower orders underwent very little change from the Reformation till within the last forty years. In their religious feelings they had been weaned from popery, . . not won from it; . . the breasts at which they had sucked-in superstition were withdrawn; but no provision had been made, as in Scotland, for rearing them

upon salubrious food. In other respects they remained much the same as they had been two centuries ago; reading and writing were but little more common among them; their habitations, their dress, their hours, their habits of life were unaltered; the only difference was, what the cultivation of the potato occasioned, and the use of tea, . . . about that time beginning to become general. But during the last forty years, a tremendous change has been going on; it has affected all classes, . . . few for the better, the lowest and most numerous greatly for the worse.

6 One chief cause of this great moral revolution (for such it may truly be called) is to be found in the improvement of machinery, and the consequent rapid increase of manufactures. The manufacturing system has been carried among us to an extent unheard of in any former age or country; it has enabled us to raise a revenue which twenty years ago we ourselves should have thought it impossible to support, and it has added even more to the activity of the country than to its ostensible wealth; but in a far greater degree has it diminished its happiness and lessened its security. Adam Smith's book is the code, or confession of faith, of this system; a tedious and hard-hearted book, greatly over-valued even on the score of ability, for fifty pages would have comprised its sum and substance.

'Cent et cent fois penser un penser mesme,'

as Ronsard says, is very natural for a lover, but not very excusable for him if he writes verses, and altogether insufferable in an author of any other

description. That book considers man as a manufacturing animal,—a definition which escaped the ancients : it estimates his importance, not by the sum of goodness and of knowledge which he possesses, not by the virtues and charities which should flow towards him and emanate from him, not by the happiness of which he may be the source and centre, not by the duties to which he is called, not by the immortal destinies for which he is created ; but by the gain which can be extracted from him, the *quantum of lucration* of which he can be made the instrument. The more perfect the fabric in which he is employed, the less intellect is required ; eyes and fingers are all that are needed. This philosophy, indeed, deals with him as Diogenes did with the cock, in derision of Plato's definition : . . pluck the wings of his intellect, strip him of the down and plumage of his virtues, and behold in the brute, denuded, pitiable animal, the man of the manufacturing system !

Some of the sciences and many of the arts require large cities to foster them ; they thrive there like exotics in a town-conservatory ; but the virtues and the comforts of inferior life wither away in such atmospheres, like flowers transplanted from the field to pine at a street-window. The peasant, however much his religious education may be neglected, cannot grow up without receiving some of the natural and softening impressions of religion. Sunday is to him a day of rest, not of dissipation ; the sabbath bells come to his ear with a sweet and tranquillizing sound ; and though he may be inattentive to the service of the church, *and uninstructed* in its tenets, still the church and

the churchyard are to him sacred places: there is the font in which he was baptized; the altar at which his parents became man and wife; the place where they and their fathers before them have listened to the word of God; the graves wherein they have been laid to rest in the Lord, and where he is one day to be laid beside them. Alas, for him, who cannot comprehend how these things act upon the human heart! The town manufacturer is removed from all these gentle and genial influences; he has no love for his birth-place or his dwelling-place, and cares nothing for the soil in which he strikes no root. One source of patriotism is thus destroyed; for, in the multitude, patriotism grows out of local attachments. *Omne solum forti patria* may be said by the exile and the cosmopolite philosopher; but *natale solum* is found among the periphrases for *patria*, and the same feeling will be found in the language of every people who are advanced one degree beyond the savage state.

The manufacturing poor are also removed from other causes which are instrumental to good conduct in the agricultural classes. They have necessarily less of that attachment to their employers which arises from long connexion, and the remembrance of kind offices received, and faithful services performed, . . . an inheritance transmitted from parent to son: and being gathered together in herds from distant parts, they have no family character to support in the place to which they have been transplanted. Their employments, too, unlike those of the handicraft and the agriculturist, are usually so conducted as to be equally

pernicious to mind and body. The consumption of life in some manufactories, even in those which might at first be thought most innocuous, though it may be a consolation to those philosophers who are afraid of being crowded at the table of nature, would make good men shudder if the account could be fully laid before them. We could mention one of the most extensive and important of our fabrics, where the first generation of persons who were employed bore the change of life without much apparent injury ; the second grew sickly and were invalided long before the natural age of decay ; and in the third the whole race was extinct !

John Hunter predicted that our manufactories would engender new varieties of pestilence. New and specific diseases they have produced, but the only pestilence which has yet manifested itself is of a moral nature. Physical diseases are not more surely generated by crowding human beings together in a state of filth and wretchedness, than moral ones by herding them together, and that, too, without distinction of sex, in a state of ignorance. This is the case under the least unfavourable circumstances which can be imagined ; but it is doubly so under the manufacturing system, where children are trained up in the way wherein that system destines them to go, as soon as their little fingers can twirl a thread, or feed a machine. When that system was at its height, the slave-trade itself was scarcely more systematically remorseless. The London workhouses supplied children by waggon-loads to those manufactories which would take them off the hands of the parish ; a new sort of slave-trade was invented ; a set of

Child-jobbers travelled the country, procuring children from parents whose poverty was such as would consent to the sacrifice, and undertaking to feed, clothe, and lodge them for the profits of their labour. In this manner were many of our great manufactories supplied! In those manufactories the machinery never stood still. One set of these poor children worked by day, another by night; and when one relay was relieved, they turned into the beds which had been vacated by the other, warm as the others had left them!..When this system had continued long enough for those who lived through so unnatural and miserable a childhood to reach the age of maturity, it was found that the girls, when they married, were utterly unable to perform the commonest and most indispensable domestic work; and the remedy which was devised for the future, was, that they should go to school to learn these things for an hour in the day, after they had done work!

Some of this evil has been mitigated: the hellish practice of night-work (it deserves no gentler qualification) is nearly, if not totally disused; but enough evil remains to produce irreparable injury to the individuals, and the most serious mischief to the community. The existing race of the manufacturing poor have been trained up certainly without moral, and it may be said without religious instruction also; for if a pulpit-lesson should now and then by accident reach their ears, there is little chance of its penetrating farther, utterly unprepared as they are for receiving it. Among the philosophers-errant who mislead themselves as well as others in confounding the distinctions between

right and wrong, there are some who, after wandering about the debatable ground between good and evil, recover the right path, and find grace to thank Providence for their escape. The bias inclines that way in the middle and higher ranks; for morals, as well as manners, follow the mode, and decorum, at least, is in fashion. But the class of which we have been speaking, have more to resist, at the same time that they are less prepared for resistance. He who has ever seen the habitations of the city poor in the cellars and garrets of courts and alleys, will easily believe that the fire-side of the pot-house holds out a stronger temptation than even the physical effect of the liquor. Goldsmith has told us how such places

‘ impart

‘ An hour’s importance to the poor man’s heart ;’

but they do more than this : they afford a stimulus of society which he cannot find elsewhere ; strong humour and vulgar wit come with double fascination to those whose intellectual powers are stagnant at home ; the coarseness of boisterous mirth acts upon them with double excitement ; and if they give themselves up to the lowest vices, ought we to wonder at this, when their better faculties have never been brought into action ? Scarce lower than the angels in the capacity of his nature, man is yet, when left to himself, scarcely above the brutes ; and if he be depraved, as well as ignorant, he is then chiefly distinguished from them by the fatal prerogative of possessing a wicked will and greater powers of mischief. When his diviner part has never been called forth, the mere animal is all that remains, and mere animal gratification

must be the natural end and aim of his blind desires.

These are not the mere imaginations of a speculative moralist. It is notorious that the manners of the people in manufacturing districts are peculiarly dissolute. Saint Monday is the only saint in the journeyman's kalendar; and there are many places where one of the working days of the week is regularly set apart for drunkenness, like a sabbath of irreligion. However high the wages may be, profligacy of every kind keeps pace, and draws after it its inevitable punishment of debility, disease, poverty, want, and early death. For the main cause of the increase of pauperism it is needless to go farther than the increase of manufactures, . . . that very increase which has so often been triumphantly appealed to in proof of the prosperity of the country. Even in quiet times, and when, to outward appearance, the country was flourishing beyond all example in former ages, this evil was felt, . . . an evil in itself of sufficient magnitude, but of the most frightful nature when those circumstances are considered which give it a direct political bearing.

‘Two causes,’ says the fictitious Espriella, whom in this place I may be permitted to quote, ‘and only two, will rouse a peasantry to rebellion; ‘intolerable oppression, or religious zeal either for ‘the right faith or the wrong: no other motive ‘is powerful enough. A manufacturing poor is ‘more easily instigated to revolt. They have no ‘local attachments; the persons to whom they look ‘up for support they regard more with envy than ‘respect, as men who grow rich by their labour;

they know enough of what is passing in the political world to think themselves politicians; they feel the whole burden of taxation, which is not the case with the peasant, because he raises a great part of his own food; they are aware of their own numbers; and the moral feelings which in the peasant are only blunted, are in these men debauched. A manufacturing populace is always ripe for rioting; the direction which this fury may take is accidental. In 1780 it ran against the Catholics; in 1790 against the Dissenters. Governments who found their prosperity upon manufactures, sleep upon gunpowder.

‘Do I then think,’ continues the writer, ‘that England is in danger of revolution? If the manufacturing system continues to be extended, increasing, as it necessarily does increase, the number, the misery, and the depravity of the poor, I believe that revolution inevitably must come, and in its most fearful shape. That system, if it continues to increase, will more effectually tend to ruin England than all the might and all the machinations of her enemies, were they ten times more formidable than they are. It communicates just knowledge enough to the populace to make them dangerous, and it poisons their morals. The temper of the mob has been manifested at the death of Despard, and there is no reason to suppose that it is not the same in all other great towns as in London. It will be well for England when her cities shall decrease, and her villages multiply and grow; when there shall be fewer streets and more cottages. The tendency of the present system is to convert the

‘peasantry into poor; her policy should be to reverse this, and to convert the poor into peasantry; to increase them and to enlighten them; for their numbers are the strength, and their knowledge is the security of states.’

The Luddites, and the temper which the mob in London, as well as in Nottingham, manifested upon the murder of Mr. Perceval, have but too fully approved this foresight. How that temper has been produced, deserves further investigation. The state of parties and the press will go far toward explaining it. That there is any organized plan for effecting a revolution in this country we are far from asserting or believing; but it by no means follows that the preparatory work of revolution is not going on. There is no commissariat for supplying London, and yet London is supplied with a regularity and abundance which no commissariat, however perfect, could possibly accomplish. If one political writer vilifies every measure of the existing administration; if another reviles all parties in their turn with equal virulence; if a third systematically holds up the Royal Family to derision and abhorrence; and a fourth labours to bring the whole system of government into contempt and hatred,—though the first should merely be the faithful adherent of a political faction; though mere malevolence should be the influencing motive of the second; the third be actuated by mere humour, or by neediness acting upon a profligate mind; and the fourth be led astray by juvenile presumption or mistaken zeal; though all these persons should be utterly unconnected with, or even hostile to each other, they co-operate as

effectually together to one direct end as if they were bound by oaths and sacraments, and that end is as directly the overthrow of their country as if all four were the salaried instruments of France.

He who finds a factious newspaper upon his breakfast table, and, casting his eyes over its columns while he sips his coffee, smiles at its blunders, or at most vents a malediction, more in wonder than in indignation, at the impudent villainy of its falsehoods, has but a faint conception of its effects upon the great body of its readers. Journals of this description are not designed for those whose place in society indisposes them to revolutionary tenets, or whom a sound understanding, and a mind well stored, have fortified, as with *mithridate*, against such poison. But there are thousands, and tens of thousands, prepared for it by the manufacturing system as completely as soldiers by want and cold are prepared for camp contagion. It is upon men whom that system has depraved, that the diatribes of the anarchists operate with full effect. Those persons, if there be any such, who would keep the people ignorant because they rely upon their ignorance as a preservative, are not more lamentably erroneous in judgement than ignorant themselves of the state of the society in which they live. Where one who can read is to be found, all who have ears can hear. The weekly epistles of the apostles of sedition are read aloud in tap-rooms and pot-houses to believing auditors, listening greedily when they are told that their rulers fatten upon the gains extracted from their blood and sinews; that they are cheated, oppressed, and

plundered; that their wives and children are wanting bread, because a corrupt majority in parliament persists in carrying on a war which there was no cause for beginning, and to which there can be no end in view; that there is neither common sense nor common honesty in the government; that the liberty of the press has been destroyed, and they are, in fact, living under military law; that they are a flogged nation, . . and flogging is only fit for beasts, . . and beasts they are, . . and like beasts they deserve to be treated, if they submit patiently to such wrongs and insults;—these are the topics which are received in the pot-house, and discussed over the loom and the lathe: men already profligate and unprincipled, needy because they are dissolute, and discontented because they are needy, swallow these things when they are getting drunk, and chew the cud upon them when sober. The lessons are repeated day after day, and week after week. If madder be administered to a pig only for a few days, his bones are reddened with its dye; and can we believe that the bloody colouring of such ‘pig’s meat *’ as this will not find its way into the system of those who take it for their daily food?

Some years ago a lady published a vindication of Eve for having eaten the apple, arguing that the woman acted nobly and from the generous

* ‘Pig’s meat,’ ‘Hog’s wash,’ and ‘Food for the swinish multitude,’ were titles of seditious *brochures* published by Daniel Isaac Eaton and Spence, the earlier and honester but less dexterous apostles of anarchy in this country. Both these men were political fanatics. Pure profligacy, rather than mistaken principle, instigates some of their successors.

desire of acquiring knowledge, in order that Adam and herself might become as gods. The heresy was new, which is some merit in a heresy, . . . for even Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote have no pretensions to novelty in their doctrines. But the female heresiarch's arguments proved only the ingenuity of the tempter; and, like that tempter, they who are now labouring to seduce the people, fail not to allure them with promises of unattainable good, perverting to vile purposes the sacred names of laws, and liberty, and constitution, and dealing out vague generalities and inapplicable truisms, while their main appeal is to the vanity and the evil passions of an uninstructed multitude. Marat and Hebert were continually talking to the people of their rights, and representing themselves as the enlightened friends of humanity. Our sappers and miners tread faithfully in their steps as far as they have hitherto gone; and there are but too many circumstances which favour the machinations of such mischievous and wicked men.

Among these circumstances the manufacturing system again presents itself in the first rank. The extent to which it has been carried makes a large part of our population dependent for employ, . . . which is, in fact, for subsistence, . . . upon other countries; and when the tyranny of a barbarous conqueror in Europe, and the servility or corruption of a ruling faction in America, shut us out from our accustomed markets, distress and riots in the manufacturing districts are the consequence. Let it not be supposed that we are among the wholesale *declaimers* against foreign commerce; or that,

because we perceive the fatal consequences which result from the manufacturing system, carried on as it has hitherto been, we would, in the spirit of radical reform, destroy it root and branch. Doubtless it has been productive of great and essential benefit: doubtless it has been necessary in that process which is continually going on for the advancement of humankind: doubtless the eventual good will abundantly overbalance the evil with which it may have been purchased. But as nations may be too warlike for their own happiness, or even their own security, so they may be too commercial. What one of the wisest of the heathens has told us, is applicable in policy as well as in ethics: . . . *Tὰ δὲ οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, ἀσθενῆ, δοῦλα, κωλυτὰ, ἀλλότρια*. When the evil is discovered, one great step is made towards the cure; and that it is an evil to have whole districts dependent for support upon the politics of a foreign cabinet, is now proved by our own experience. Want will make even those persons turbulent who would be otherwise every way disposed to be industrious and peaceable: what facilities, then, must it afford to the agitators who, by every imaginable means, are labouring to excite mutinous feelings, and set the people against the government! *Malesuada* is the epithet by which Virgil characterizes hunger; and the old rebels in Henry VIII.'s time felt themselves, beyond all doubt, fully justified in their insurrection when they told the Duke of Norfolk that 'Poverty' was their captain, the which, with his cousin 'Necessity, had brought them to that doing.'

In other times we have had men thrown out of employ by the fluctuations of foreign politics, but

their numbers have been comparatively trifling, and the effect partial; nor were there in those days public speakers and public writers ready to inflame their discontent and array them against their rulers. The rapid increase of manufactures, and the wider scale upon which hostility is carried on against us, have caused the effect now to be felt over every part of the country; and a cause which arises out of our real improvement and the high degree of civilization to which we have attained, has given consistency to the danger. Bodies of men, associating for unlawful purposes in England, are at no loss how to organize themselves; for nowhere in the world has the principle of political association ever been so well and so generally understood. We have not only the *imperium in imperio* of the Quakers, and that of the Wesleyan Methodists (each of them perfect in its kind); but every sectarian community, every joint-company, every parish club, affords a model; and as some or other of these institutions exist in every village throughout the kingdom, the people are everywhere familiarly versed in such practical details of business as are applicable upon the widest scale. Our benefit societies (in their origin as old as the Saxon guilds), which, in their right application, are excellent, and which have properly been encouraged by the legislature, have been perverted to the most mischievous purposes. The number of persons who belonged to these societies ten years ago, when the poor-returns were made, amounted to 704,350, of whom nearly half*, at least, may be

* This is inferred from the proportion which the manufacturing bears to the agricultural class. The late Population Returns state

supposed to belong to the manufacturing class. When the Luddites began to organize themselves, the funds of the societies to which they belonged afforded them a ready supply; and when further resources were needed, they knew how to raise a revenue as well as the skilfullest financiers of Downing-street. In this country, journeymen have long been accustomed to combine for the purpose of obtaining higher pay from their employers; each trade has its fund for such occasions, raised by weekly or monthly payments; the different trades assist each other in their combinations, and the business is managed by secret committees. In this manner the shoemakers, when they *struck work*, two or three years ago, were enabled to support a loss of wages to the amount of nearly half a million! Besides this resource, it has been ascertained that the Luddites, under pretext of defraying the expenses of a petition for parliamentary reform, levied a contribution of half-a-crown a man upon their fellow-workmen throughout an extensive part of the country, where no disturbances were apparent.

Such, then, are the means which the disaffected part of the populace have in their hands. If at any former time the mob were inflamed with sedition, they were a headless multitude, bound together only by the momentary union of blind passion; they are now an organized association, with their sections, their secret committees, and

the number of families in Great Britain at 2,544,000, of which 896,000 are engaged in agriculture; and 1,129,000 in trade, manufactures, and handicraft occupations. All others, that is to say, the very poor, the very rich, and the professional, amount to 519,000.

their treasury. These are fearful circumstances, even if temporary distress were the only cause of the existing spirit of insubordination. But in addition to this, there is to be taken into the account of danger the alarming fact, which few have noticed, and of the importance of which fewer still are aware, that jacobinism, having almost totally disappeared from the educated classes, has sunk down into the mob; so that, since the year 1793, our internal state has in this respect undergone as great a change as our foreign relations, and a far more perilous one. There was a wild cosmopolite character about the democracy of the last generation; old men of warm hearts and sanguine spirits sung their *Nunc dimittis*; and young men of ardent mind and generous inexperience became enthusiastic disciples of a political faith which ushered itself into the world with the lying annunciation of 'Peace on earth, good will among men.' The better spirits, who were thus led astray by the prospects which the French Revolution seemed, as they thought, at its commencement, to open for human kind, mingled their crude politics with principles as crude, but which were both too generous and too wild ever to become popular. Their talk was not merely of the rights of man, but of the hopes and destinies of the human race; of rapid improvement and indefinite progression. The populace were incapable of entering into such views; they beheld nothing in these visionaries but their direct political bearing; and finding them hostile to the Anti-Jacobin war, regarded them as men *who preferred France to England*, and therefore *as enemies to their country*. At the same time

the baser crew of democrats, who aped the follies of the French, and felt no horror at their crimes, shocked their countrymen by open professions of profligate impiety. That this was the feeling of the populace twenty years ago, is notorious to every one who remembers that stirring season. Wherever any riots broke out, 'Church and King' was the cry of the mob, and their fury was directed against those whom they looked upon as the enemies of both. Time passed on; the character of the French revolution developed itself; that which had been fondly worshipped at its uprise as 'the day-star of liberty,' . . . the star in the East, guiding us to political redemption, . . . proved to be a baleful comet, shedding pestilence and destruction over the nations. Jacobinism fell under the sword of military despotism in France,—the fate which universally must terminate its success: of its partisans in England, some sunk into contempt, some were cooled by years, others sobered by experience: their dreams were dissipated; their philosophy grew out of fashion; their irreligion was hooted out of sight; the great experiment to which they appealed had failed; and such is the deadening effect of disappointed hope upon those who have no strength of mind to reclaim them when they have gone wrong, or support them when they are right, that many of those persons who had been warmest in their admiration of the French revolution, looked now upon the struggle of the Spaniards with utter apathy, prophesied their failure, depreciated their exertions, insulted over their losses, and, learning to hate the people whom *coldness of heart* and *error of intellect* had made

them injure, laboured to the utmost to assist in accomplishing their own predictions.

While the spirit of jacobinism had thus evaporated from the top of the vessel, its dregs were settling at the bottom. It had lost its generalizing spirit and its metaphysics: whatever, also, had made it alluring to the young, and ardent, and enthusiastic lovers of their kind, was gone: it had become selfish and grovelling; yet, because of its very deterioration, the more dangerous. New demagogues appeared upon the stage, . . children of Mammon, and wiser in their generation. They understood the temper of the vulgar too well to preach to them of fine fabrics of society, the diffusion of general knowledge, and the millennium of wisdom and philosophy. Their arguments are adapted more wisely to that part of the people with whom, as they are pleased to proclaim, the physical force is lodged. The reformation for which they plead is to save money*; it is a matter

* ‘ This,’ said Mr. Windham, in one of his best speeches, ‘ is the great work on which the artificers of revolution are at present employed. They say to the people, You are all sensible of the burdens under which you labour: you all dislike the payment of taxes. Now what is it that carries the taxes to this immense amount? A common man would say, the immense amount of the civil and military establishments of a great empire, extending over half the world; the numbers of civil officers necessary to carry on its business in time of peace, and the armies and navies, with all their attendant train of expenses, to provide for its security in case of war. But no, say the band of patriots here alluded to, these expenses might well be borne; what sinks the country is the wasteful expenditure of the public money in jobs and corruption, in sinecure places and pensions. It is the abuses that undo us, the abuses that we must correct; and as it is parliament that sanctions, if it is not itself the great seat of the abuse, it is parliament that we must correct and reform. Once persuade the people that all their payments and burdens are the

not of morality, not of feeling, not of honour, but of pounds, shillings, and pence; according to them the wisdom of public measures is to be estimated precisely according to the expenditure which they cause. Government, they affirm, is a combination of the rich, formed for the purpose of raising money from the people, and dividing it among themselves and their dependents. Never before had sedition appeared in so sordid a shape. These men understand the laws too well to recommend openly the destruction of monarchy, and the abolishment of all distinctions of rank. There is no danger in advertising journals, the professed object of which is *'to exhibit to the people the hideous system by which they are at once cajoled and coerced, thereby to rouse them to an united*

'consequence of abuse or mismanagement in some part of the government, and you produce a state of feeling adequate to almost any purpose for which it can be wanted. Taxes and abuses joined, generate a kind of expansive force, that will burst asunder even the best compacted governments. The abuses, too, serve to give a direction to the discontent and angry feeling produced in the first instance by the taxes. They stand in the place of the abstract rights of a few years ago, and are the last improvement made in the machine for overturning states, from which it is conceived to derive a much greater heft and purchase, than in its old form of 'taxes and the rights of man.' A number of persons are accordingly in a constant state of active search, prying about among the establishments, and winding round, like a woodpecker round a tree, in the hopes of finding some unsound part, into which they may strike their beaks and begin to work; but not like the honest woodpecker, who is only in search of the grubs and worms on which to make a meal, and is at least indifferent as to the fate of the tree. They, on the contrary, only take the grubs and worms for their pretext, and have for their ultimate object to open a hole, into which the wet and the rot may enter, and by which the tree, the British Oak (a beautiful shaft of I know not how many load, and the growth of ages), may decay and *'perish.'*

call for reformation too general to be mistaken, and too potent to be resisted.' Radical reform is a safer text than revolution; the same sermon will suit either; the same end is effectually furthered by both. The folly and stupidity of ministers, the profligacy of public men, the oppressiveness of government, and the waste of public money, are the anarchists' constant theme. Knowing, also, that

' Majesty

' Needs all the props of admiration

' to bear it up on high.....'

they omit no opportunity of vilifying the royal family. In this manner have they for years been addressing themselves to the passions of the vulgar; flattering their vanity by telling them that wisdom and virtue must proceed from them, and that the way to remedy all evils is to have all elections popular, and make the representative receive instructions from his constituents; exciting their indignation against their rulers, and provoking their selfishness and pride, at the same time, by persuading them that they are plundered by the government, and cheated by the public servants. Their changes are rung upon corruption, speculation, inquiry, and justice*; and reform, radical reform, is still the burthen of the song.

* Their notions upon this head may be illustrated by an anecdote in point. A gentleman of the fraternity, who had been somewhat notorious in his time, was talking one day rather freely about the *heads* (in the literal sense) of the ruling party, when he was reminded by a democrat of a different school, that the friends of freedom ought only to consider justice, and that it was unphilosophical, and consequently wrong, to indulge feelings of revenge. The journalist was staggered at this, and admitted, in reply, that revenge, to be sure, ought not to be thought of..but, he added, I have been taken up

It has been confidently asserted, that some of the anarchist writers are in the pay of France. We do not believe it: and whether it be so or not is altogether unimportant, for what occasion has the enemy to hire agents when there are so many who act for him gratuitously? To slander public and private characters has become a regular trade in England, and miscreants of one description take to it just as miscreants of another to the more dangerous, but not more nefarious, practices of thieving and robbing; they begin upon players, and they end upon princes. There is another class less noxious to society, and in themselves less detestable, but enemies in like manner to public order. A forum orator some years ago published a tour, in which he described the gratification which he felt in the act of being overturned in a stage-coach, because, never having met with such an accident before, it gave him an opportunity of experiencing a new sensation! Gentlemen whose lives and limbs are matters of such trifling concern to themselves, may be equally well disposed to try what sort of sensation the overthrow of a government would produce. It is no new thing for wretches to set fire to a house, for the purpose of plundering during the confusion; ought we then to doubt that there may be those who would commit state-arson for motives of a like nature? But whether they commence their career thus without principle, or under the influence of erroneous notions and mistaken zeal, personal feeling brings them to the same state of eleven times by these fellows, and must not I have a little *justice* for that?

mind : they get within reach of the law at some time or other, and then, beginning in good earnest to abhor the government which has corrected them, they labour in their vocation with hearty virulence, hoping one day to change places with the attorney-general.

Men of these various descriptions* have been writing to the populace for years past ; they are not without employment in the daily press ; but the weekly press is almost exclusively their own, and this is of far more importance ; for it is the weekly paper which finds its way to the pot-house in town, and the ale-house in the country, inflaming the turbulent temper of the manufacturer, and disturbing the quiet attachment of the peasant to those institutions under which he and his fathers have dwelt in peace. He receives no account of public affairs (and these are times in which the remotest peasant feels an anxiety concerning them which was never known before) but what comes

* The conduct which some of these agitators pursue, in furtherance of a deliberate system, is followed by a few other journalists from pure profligacy, .. because it serves their immediate interest. A curious instance of this has been proved in a court of justice. One of the daily papers was convicted of a flagrant and most inflammatory libel upon the Horse-guards, for their conduct during the disturbances which Sir Francis Burdett had occasioned ; it appeared in evidence, that the paper in question had declined in sale by taking the side of the Covent-Garden managers in the O. P. war ; that a meeting of the proprietors, who were a committee of auctioneers, was held upon the present business, to determine what line of politics would be most likely to recover the popularity which they had lost ; that upon this ground they resolved to espouse the part of Sir Francis, and gave especial directions not to spare the soldiers ; and because the ostensible editor, happening to think otherwise, did not write with sufficient spirit upon the occasion, an unlucky assistant stepped in to infuse gall into his columns ; the effect of which was, that the printer and publisher were sent to Newgate.

through these polluted sources. The murderers of Overbury destroyed him by seasoning with poison whatever he took, his food, his drink, and his medicine; so every thing is drugged which passes through the hands of the radical journalists. Victory is depreciated, and represented as matter of regret, because it tends to lengthen a war which the anarchists and the despondents have pronounced hopeless; failure is exaggerated and made matter of consolation, or ill-concealed joy, because it brings us nearer to an abandonment of the contest. With whatever enemy we may be engaged, upon whatever cause, in whatever quarrel, it is England which is wrong, it is England which ought to yield. If Buonaparte be spoken of, his crimes are palliated or concealed, his success blazoned, his talents magnified, and held up for awe and admiration; his policy described as infallible; his means inexhaustible; his power not to be resisted. Thus do these men labour to destroy in their readers all sympathy with their country; all joy in her triumph; all natural pride in her glory; all generous exultation in her name; all interest in her cause. At home every thing is represented in the darkest colours; nothing but imbecility, venality, profligacy, profusion, waste and peculation on the part of the rulers; on the part of the people distress, misery, hunger:.. the populace are reminded of their numbers, they are told of their strength, and they are reproached for their patience,..

‘Pack-bearing patience, that base property

‘And silly gift of the all-enduring ass.’

Every topic is made subservient to the same con-

clusion, that things are bad, and must be changed ; that corruption must be cut up by the roots ; that the soil must be cleared by the plough and the harrow.

When corn has become damaged it is said to evolve a specific poison for the human system : poison of this kind, being administered in the daily bread of the people, has been producing slowly but surely the effect for which it was intended. We are most of us like cameleons, and reflect the colour of the opinions by which we are surrounded. The cochineal insect derives its splendid dye from the plant on which it is reared. .

.. the fly

That feeds on dung is coloured thereby.

Herbert.

The Greenlander exhales essence of train-oil from every pore ; and in like manner they who are dieted upon this garbage, necessarily imbibe its taint. It is now ' become rank, and smells to heaven.' But though the eruption did not shew itself till a fit opportunity occurred last year, the infection had long been taken. The famous text in Ezekiel*, which is the watch-word of the Luddites, was current among the manufacturers of the north more than seven years before they made any public manifestation of a seditious spirit. This fact is within our own knowledge ; and we know also another fact, equally serious in itself, and which ought to operate as a

* ' And thou, profane Prince of Israel, whose day is come, whose iniquity shall have an end,.. Thus saith the Lord God : Remove the diadem and take off the crown : this shall not be the same : exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high... I will overturn, overturn, overturn it.'... xxi. 25. 6, 7.

warning upon those persons whom it concerns. The secret directors of these people, who have given sufficient proofs of their ability for mischief, lose no opportunity of encouraging their confederates by producing authorities in their favour; and they are at no loss where to look for them. Speeches which produce no other effect in parliament than that of exciting indignation at the effrontery of those who deliver them, or wonder at their infatuation, operate very differently when they are reported in a condensed shape, and all exposure of their futility and falsehood is withheld. For this, no doubt, they are designed, as far as is consistent with regular party policy; but the Luddite committees make a farther use of them; and the most inflammatory harangues of this description are printed like dying-speeches, and sold through the manufacturing districts at a halfpenny or penny each. The effusions of the hot city orators, and the most incendiary paragraphs of the anarchist journals, are circulated in the same manner.

‘ Give me the press,’ said Mr. Sheridan, ‘ against venal lords, commons, or princes. . . against despotism of any kind, or in any shape. . . let me but array a free press, and the liberties of England will stand unshaken.’ And what if the press, in abuse of freedom, and to the eventual destruction of freedom, its own as well as all other, should be arrayed against king, lords, and commons, and governments of every kind? . . . What would remain unshaken then? The press, like all other powerful engines, is mighty for mischief as well as for good, and little must they be aware of the force of this

artillery who imagine that any government can suffer itself to be battered in breach by it with impunity. Look to the facts, and see what the licentiousness of the press has already produced! The armed associations of Nottingham and Yorkshire, adding to the secrecy and combination of the United Irishmen, the coolness and regularity of the English character, and disgracing that character by the principles which they hold, the end at which they aim, and the assassinations which they have committed; even these conspirators against life, property, and social order, are less alarming, in their acts and in their purposes, than are the symptoms which manifested themselves among the mob upon the death of Mr. Perceval. Who does not know that men and women and children paraded the streets of a populous city, in the heart of England, with flags in honour of that event. . . in honour of the murder of one who carried into public life the gentleness of his individual character, and, in his private station, was the model of every virtue? The victories of a Nelson or a Wellington would not have excited more overflowing joy in them, when their natural feelings were uncorrupted, than was displayed upon this accursed occasion. Bonfires were kindled to celebrate a deed by which the peaceable part of the community were shocked as at some unwonted visitation of heaven, and for which, when they had recovered from the first stunning sensation, they grieved as for a private and peculiar calamity. The same un-English, un-Christian, inhuman spirit displayed itself in Cornwall; and in London the indication of the temper of

the populace was yet worse. Before it had been suspected, or could possibly be known, that the assassin was in a state of mind which rendered him as much an object of compassion as of horror, he became the favourite of the mob, as if he had been their friend, their champion, their self-devoted hero and deliverer. Attempts were made to rescue him, as he was conveyed to prison, by the chance rabble collected on the way ; and at those public-houses which are frequented by the lower orders about town, scenes were witnessed not to be remembered without shuddering. Healths were drunk, accompanied with ferocious exultation for what had been done, and more ferocious anticipations of what, it was hoped, was soon to follow. The imagination of a dramatist could conceive no fitter prelude to the most dreadful tragedy of popular madness.

These, then, are the feelings of the pot-house politicians, who have for years past been sucking in the virulence and venom of the demagogue journalists with their daily potations. When Sir Francis Burdett heard how the wretches who would have rescued Bellingham huzzaed his name, we certainly believe that no man regretted it more than himself. At that time, and in those rejoicings, their temper disclosed itself without disguise, . . . the temper of that rabble who vociferate for purity of election, throw up their hats for him, and lackey the heels of his processions. They ratified the murder ; they made it their own act and deed, and even contracted in it a degree of guilt which did not attach to the perpetrator ; for that unhappy man (though never was the forfeiture

of life more imperiously required for the sake of society) it was impossible not to feel something like compassion : but what shall be said of those writers, who, by their pestilent perseverance in preaching evil, prepared the people to rejoice in his crime, and who have been wicked enough to hold up the victim as a warning, instead of the murderer !

They have leavened the mass, and the leaven continues to work ; for we must not deceive ourselves, and suppose that the spirit of insubordination, which has been thus excited and thus manifested, is extinguished, or even abated. It has been suspended, in the manufacturing districts, because the harvest brought a temporary alleviation of the existing distress, and because summer is not the favourite season of those who require the cover of darkness for their deeds. ‘ *Long nights and bloody blankets,*’ was one of the ferocious toasts of the United Irish : the union which has been formed in our own country is of the same character, and tends to the same effect. So surely as the pressure of scarcity shall again be felt, so surely will the outrages be renewed. The causes are not removed ; the association is not broken ; the spirit exists ; the means are not exhausted ; and the same stimulants are still administered by the same incendiaries. If this system be not effectually checked, a *Jacquerie*, a *bellum servile* will be the result.

Mr. Sheridan has said, that there are three ways of destroying the liberty of the press : ‘ one is by ‘ oppressive acts of parliament ; another by *ex officio* informations, and the unconstitutional

‘ banishment of printers to distant gaols ; and the
‘ third, by raising the price of cheap publications.’
In this country, heaven be praised, the press is in
no danger from either ; but there is a fourth, and
far more effectual way, which Mr. Sheridan over-
looked, . . by giving full play to its licentiousness.
Among the truths, of universal application, which
history teaches to those who are capable of re-
ceiving its lessons, there is none more certain than
that the abuse of liberty is always followed by the
loss of liberty : it is not more the rightful punish-
ment than it is the necessary consequence of the
crime. Check the abuse of the press before the
crisis is produced, and its inestimable blessings
will be preserved ; but if the anarchists be suffered
to carry on their sapping and mining, and to keep
their batteries in full play, the liberty of the press
would not indeed be destroyed by their triumph
(for their eventual triumph cannot be contemplated
as a possibility), but assuredly it would be put
an end to after their destruction. The immediate
horrors of the *Jacquerie* would be our portion ; the
fatal consequences would be felt by our children,
and our children’s children. As for those persons
who, misunderstanding this, or misrepresenting
it, would take shelter in the common-places of their
orators, and tell us that the freedom of the press is
like the reputation of a woman, not to be touched
without injury ; . . that it furnishes always its own
remedy, and conveys the antidote as well as the
bane . . such reasonings, if they were not likely to
proceed sometimes from well-meaning men, would
be too silly to deserve refutation. A word suffices
for refuting them. What reason have you to sup-

pose that they who swallow the bane will be persuaded to take the antidote? And would you suffer lewd and impious books to be distributed in your family, because you can give your boys and girls sermons and treatises of morality to counteract their effect?

But in reality that coercion which self-preservation renders necessary, trenches no more upon the freedom of the press than the laws against robbery and murder trench upon freedom of action. The law already determines the offence, . . what seems to be required is an alteration in the nature of the punishment. Fine and imprisonment are inflictions sufficiently severe, but they fail in their purpose : they may materially injure, or even ruin, the fortunes of a libeller, and they may break his health ; but they do not take from him the means of doing mischief, and assuredly do not diminish his disposition for it ; . .

* The creature's at his dirty work again.*

The law, therefore, as it stands at present, punishes, but has little or no effect in lessening the frequency of the offence. Transportation would be the proper and efficient penalty. The great end of punishment would be perfectly attained by it ; and no other means could be so likely for promoting that secondary end also, which, when it is attainable, is always to be borne in mind, . . the reformation of the offender ; for the man who is a bad subject here, may become a useful member of society in another region, where he has neither opportunity nor means of committing his old offences.

The incendiaries have succeeded in kindling a flame : it is in the power of the laws to prevent

them from extending it, and adding fuel to the conflagration. There are other causes which tend to shake the fabric of our prosperity, over which government, indeed, has no control. The wide-spreading defection from the national church is one ; another is to be found in those attempts to remodel the English laws, which, if they were successful, would change the very principle upon which those admirable laws have been founded, and which even now loosen their hold upon the hearts of the people. More direct mischief is produced by the paltry proceedings of those save-all politicians, who boast of their economy in banishing newspapers from the public offices, and who calculate to the fraction of a pen what quantity of quill-barrel ought to be allowed for a clerk's daily consumption. This pitiful spirit courts popularity by addressing itself to the meanest feelings of the multitude ; and the anarchists need wish for no better assistance than that which is given them by these unintentional and mole-eyed coadjutors. But the more these causes, which are not within reach of the executive government, aggravate the existing danger, the more necessary it is that speedy and vigorous measures should be taken for removing such as are under its control.

The first duty of government is to stop the contagion ; the next, as far as possible, to remove the causes which have predisposed so large a part of the populace for receiving it. First, we must silence the batteries, and repair the breach ; then search out and remedy the dry rot which is in our walls. It is not enough to break up the seditious associations of the Luddites while the arm of

the law has yet strength to quell them, nor to perform the equally urgent duty of relieving that large portion of the deluded populace whom 'Poverty and his cousin Necessity have brought to these doings.' We shall do little if we do not guard against a recurrence of the danger by wise and extensive measures of prospective policy. And this brings us to the concluding part of this imperfect essay.

The anarchists may be silenced, and the associations of their disciples broken up; but while the poor continue what they are, continuing also, as they must, to gain in number upon the more prosperous classes, the materials for explosion will always be under our feet. The first and most urgent business is to provide relief for those upon whom the pressure of the times bears hardest. Charity is no where so abundantly and munificently displayed as in England, not even in those countries where alms-giving is considered as a commutation for sin; but mere charity is not what is needed in this emergency. The various plans which have been devised, and the local and partial experiments which have been made for bettering the condition of the poor, as reported by the society embodied for that purpose, are highly honourable to the members of that society, and to the land in which they exist. The society which has been formed under the auspices of the Duke of York, for the immediate purpose of affording assistance to the distressed counties, is doing much; and there is cause to hope that the benefit which must result from its encouragement of the fisheries will continue after the emergency is

past. The food which is thus brought into the market is so much clear gain ; it is nutritious ; it is the cheapest which can possibly be procured ; it is drawn from a source of supply which is inexhaustible ; and the mode of procuring it adds to our best defence, by keeping up a nursery for our fleets.

There is another way by which employment might be provided for many of those whom want of work renders not only burthensome, but dangerous to society, and from which permanent good would ensue to the community. These ends might be attained, if our great landholders could be persuaded, instead of adding estate to estate, till they count whole districts, and almost whole counties within their domains, to apply the capital, that is thus directed, to the better purpose of doubling the value of the lands which they already possess, by bringing them into the highest state of cultivation of which they are capable. How many are the marshes which might thus be drained, the moors which might be reclaimed, the wild and lonely heaths which would be rendered productive, and where villages would grow round the first rude huts of the labourers ! Great indeed is the present relief which might thus be afforded to those who need it, the permanent advantage to the country, and ultimately to the principal landholders themselves : but that they should thus see their true interest, and act upon it, is rather to be wished than expected. *Crescit indulgens sibi*, may be said as truly of every moral infirmity as of the *dirus hydrops* ; and of all the maxims of proverbial wisdom which ex-

perience has bequeathed to mankind, there is none which is so seldom practically applied, and few which are so widely applicable, as that which is contained in the old Ascræan's exclamation,

Νήπιοι, ἐδ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἡμῖν παντός.

It may seem, perhaps, paradoxical at first to assert that a season of pressure, like the present, is a fit season for undertaking national works; yet nothing can be more certain, than that the public must, in some form or other, support those who are deprived of their usual employments; and that it is better to administer this relief in the form of wages, than of poor-rates. The mouths cannot be idle; and as the great object is to prevent the hands from being so, a time when there are many hands out of employ is, of all others, the time for such labours. One way or other, be it remembered, the men must be maintained: it is therefore more wholesome for the community to have the advantage of their labour, and for themselves to feel that they earn their own maintenance, than that they should be fed gratuitously, and that we should have a race in England half Luddite, half Lazzaroni. No time, therefore, can be so proper for national works, for making new naval stations and improving the old, for cutting roads, draining fens, and recovering tracts of country by embankments from the sea. One easy mode may be pointed out of affording work for thousands in their own parishes, to the credit of the country, and the great accommodation of the people. The public roads in this kingdom are good for all purposes

of rapid communication (though even in this essential point Mr. Edgeworth has long since shewn how they might be improved), but the accommodation of the foot-traveller is almost generally neglected. In the high state of civilization to which we have attained, it is fitting that there should be, from village to village and from town to town (wherever the nature of the soil does not render it unnecessary), a raised foot-path by the wayside. Our soldiers, who have so often to plod along, weary and foot-sore, through sludge and mire, would feel the full benefit of such an improvement. In calculating the expense, it is to be considered, that if the counties do not disburse it through the way-wardens, they must disburse a large proportion of it through the overseers. Let it not be said that such pathways are not necessary, because they have not hitherto been thought so; . . some attention is due to those who walk as well as to those who ride, . . to the drover as well as to the stage-coachman. The object is neither useless nor unimportant; . . but better is it to engage in works of ostentatious convenience, . . better would it be for the state to build pyramids in honour of our Nelsons and Wellingtons, or Towers of Babel for star-gazing, than that men who have hands, and are willing to work, should hunger for want of employment.

Things of this kind (and many such might be devised) are palliatives, which in this case are all that are required; this part of the evil being but for a season. The radical evil can only be cured by a course of alteratives. Discussions and speculations upon first principles of government and

abstract rights, with a view to the formation of some New Atlantis or Utopia, have an effect upon men analogous to that which novel-reading produces upon girls: as long as the inebriation lasts, it unfits them to bear their parts in the realities of life, which appear 'stale, flat, and unprofitable' to their heated and high-fed fancies. They become dissatisfied with the society in which they are placed; and because they cannot remodel its institutions according to their own notions of perfection, instead of endeavouring to lessen the quantum of evil in the world, they increase it by their factious or querulous discontent. The good which may be done in this country is immeasurably great; the disposition to it in our rulers cannot be doubted; the means are in our own hands; the invention of printing did not come more opportunely for the restoration of letters, and for the blessed work of reformation, than Dr. Bell's discovery to vaccinate the next generation against the pestilence which has infected this. The greatest boon which could be conferred upon Britain (and this is of such paramount importance that we cannot enforce it too earnestly, or repeat it too often) is a system of national education, established by the legislature in every parish, as an outwork and bulwark of the national church; so that instruction should be given to all who cannot pay for it: that, as none can die for want of food in England (the poor-rates not having been commuted for wedding-sermons against procreation), so none should be suffered to perish for lack of *knowledge*.

Reverting to immediate relief, as well as perma-

nent good, why should not government extend its military and naval seminaries, so that every boy who needed an asylum should know where to find one? Would it not be better that the workhouses should empty themselves into our fleets and armies, than that they should pack off children by wagon-loads, to grow up in the stench and moral contagion of cotton mills while the trade flourishes, and to be thrown out of employ, and turned upon the public when it meets with any sudden revolution? Seminaries of this kind may be so conducted as to cost little more than well-regulated workhouses. Boys become useful at sea at a very early age. There is no danger of overstocking ourselves with seamen; in peace the merchant-service will require all that the navy can dismiss, and in war we know what is suffered from the difficulty of procuring hands. Train up children for the land and sea service, instruct them too in their moral and religious duties, encourage them by honorary rewards, discharge them with a sum equal to the value of their full pay after they have served as many years as their country ought to require: they will then love the service; and the arts of our enemies will be as unavailing as their arms. For the surplus of an army, when war shall be at an end, there is indeed no such immediate employment as would be offered for our seamen; but the same means which would, above all others, tend to promote the power and security of Great Britain, would provide an outlet for this redundancy also.

Both services might be rendered as attractive to the lower as they are to the higher ranks, by

two regulations, just in themselves, and therefore politic, . . by appointing an increase of pay correspondent to length of service, and securing to every man who had served a certain number of years a sum which, if prudently applied, may suffice for providing him with all the comforts of life, according to his relative rank. This term might be fixed at one-and-twenty years after the age of twenty. Many would, no doubt, be tempted after that term to continue in the service, by the prospect of advantage in that lottery which it holds out, or by inclination and inveterate habits ; but every man who chose it should then be entitled to his discharge, for one-and-twenty years' service is as much as any government ought to require from its subjects. A portion of life would then be left for enjoyment ; and when it became apparent to all men that a certain and comfortable provision was to be obtained in the service of their country, it would no longer be necessary to man our fleets by violence, or recruit our army by delusion. We should hear of few desertions, and the reformation of the men would of itself produce the reform of discipline that is desirable. These are the reforms that are needful and practicable, and not less easy than desirable. Did statesmen think more wisely and more favourably of human nature, they would know that the hope of good is a far more powerful impulse than the fear of evil, and that the better they thought of mankind, the better they would find them and the better they would make them. The perfectibility of man has been made a word of ridicule by philosophists on one side, who fan-

ciated themselves perfect, and by philosophic errors on the other, whose worse error it was, that no farther improvement in human society is possible. But when these truths shall be acknowledged and become the ground-work of policy, the main step will then be taken towards that melioration of human kind, which history and true philosophy alike encourage us to expect; to which we have been commanded to press on by Him, who said unto his disciples, 'Be ye perfect!' and which, in fact, is one great purpose of revelation itself.

National education is the first thing necessary. Lay but this foundation, and the superstructure of prosperity and happiness which may be erected will rest upon a rock; the rains may descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon it, and it will not fall. Lay but this foundation, poverty will be diminished, and want will disappear in proportion as the lower classes are instructed in their duties, for then only will they understand their true interests: they will become provident, and the wages of labour may be greatly advanced to the unequivocal benefit of all persons; thus may the poor-rates be diminished, and thus only may they be ultimately abolished. Thus also should we render ourselves less dependent upon the foreign consumer; the labourer being better taught and better paid, would acquire a taste for the new comforts which would then be placed within his reach, and by raising this class of the community a step in civilisation, we create a new and numerous class of customers at home.

Is it not easy then to conceive ourselves in that state when the wishes of Henri IV. and of our own

George III. should be fulfilled, . . . when every family should have its wholesome and abundant meal, and every child be able to read its bible? To that state we are advancing; and if the anarchists and their infatuated coadjutors do not succeed in exploding the mine which they are preparing under our feet, at that state we may arrive. Neither Mr. Malthus's checks of war, famine, pestilence, and vice, nor his comfortable wedding-sermons, would be required to render it permanent. Unquestionably we should increase and multiply. There would be more Englishmen in the world, more of the countrymen of the Blakes and the Nelsons, the Wolfes and the Wellingtons, the Drakes and the Dampiers and the Cookes, the Harveys and the Hunters, the Bacons and the Newtons and the Davys, the Hookers and the Burkes, the Shakespeares and the Miltons; more of that flesh and blood which has carried our name to every part of the habitable globe; more of that intellect which has dived into the depths of nature; more of that spirit which has compassed earth and heaven!

The labouring classes have a natural tendency to increase faster than the higher ranks. Celibacy is much less frequent among them; they are more prolific; and except among the miserably poor in cities, a larger proportion of their children is *

* A book necessarily leading to such topics of discussion as Mr. Malthus's ought not to have been written in English. The main point upon which his argument turns, and the necessity of *vice* for the preservation of *good order*, were not subjects to be sent into circulating libraries and book-societies, and to be canvassed at tea-tables.

Dr. Jarrold, in his *Dissertations on Man*, very properly declares, that the nature of the subject does not admit of a full discussion. He offers, however, these sagacious observations...

‘ The relation of the mind to the body is so intimate, yet in its nature

reared. This natural and necessary increase of the working part of the community is in its effects

so incomprehensible, that all which can be done is to make some advances toward explaining of it. A bad piece of intelligence, or any event that depresses the mind, weakens the body, and interrupts the due performance of its functions. Here, then, is an incontestable proof of the relation which subsists, and which should be kept in mind as we go on. If, under circumstances of mental distress, a meal be made, the food does not digest, it is not converted into chyle and assimilated to the body, yet digestion is entirely an animal, or as some would even call it, a chemical process; the food swallowed is, in the ordinary way, acted on in the stomach, by a fluid peculiar to it (the gastric juice), but should the mind be disturbed, this juice is rendered unfit to perform the part natural to it, and the food remains unaltered. A wish will not occasion hunger, but intense thought destroys it; in consequence of the action of the mind the tears flow, the mouth becomes dry, and even the hair changes colour. No secretion is improved by the influence of the mind; on the contrary, the more powerful its operation, the less perfect is the discharge of the functions of the body.

That the influence of the mind extends to the propagation of the species, may, after what has been said, easily be credited; and is supported by facts. All savages are unprolific, and they are so just in proportion as they are entitled to this character, in other terms, as they are fierce, vindictive, and cruel. Bruce noticed this fact, with respect to some of the African tribes; but as we are somewhat better acquainted with the American, I shall particularly notice the circumstances of that people. An American lives in a forest, surrounded by enemies thirsting mutually for revenge; ardent in the pursuit of one object, his mind contemplates that alone, while the scenery around him, and his great ignorance heightens his malignancy; none of his operations are directed by an enlightened government, inspiring confidence and dispelling care, but he is at once a soldier and a statesman, on whose shoulders the concerns of the nation rest; he thinks and acts as if there were none other; the gravity of the deportment of the whole, their silence, their acute senses, their retentive memories, evince the strong and constant exercise of their minds; their life is that of care. The mind, ever on the rack, is insensible to the soul's calm sunshine. Bound by a savage bond, the members of a tribe direct their joint efforts to the extirpation of their enemies; by this motive, and to this end, all their actions are directed, wealth they disregard, and are insensible to honour, unless it be con-

just what we make it. If the duty of providing for such an increase, and of instructing the people be

'nected with blood. A life so spent must affect the constitution, the economy of nature is interrupted and broken, the whole system is deranged, and few children are born. But, on the other hand, the American, who spends his life in tranquillity, who is free from care, is surrounded by a numerous offspring. Can there be an inference more natural, than that the number of children depend on the condition of life. Again, in civilized society, instances are common of a family that promised to be numerous being stopped in its progress by some circumstance of distress preying on the minds of the parents. It seldom happens that an honest man is a parent in the year in which he becomes a bankrupt.'

The same effect as is produced by a life of care, of fear and of suspicion, is also produced by the predominance of any strong passion; the more the mind is exerted, the more the body suffers. Man is a prolific animal in proportion as he is a tranquil one; and the nearer he approaches to an animal, the more prolific does he become. It is the lower class which supplies the constant consumption of society; it is they who are cut off by contagious diseases, who are poisoned in manufactories, who supply our fleets and our armies. The other class of society are exempt from most of these chances of destruction; yet they produce little or no surplus of population, and the families of all such as have been truly illustrious soon become extinct. The most thoughtful people, taken as a body, are the least prolific. An increase of animal life depends on something more than animal passion, or the abundance of the means of subsistence.

In these valuable Dissertations, Dr. Jarrold has inquired by what means the stronger beasts of prey, constituted, as animals are, with a stronger principle of increase than man, are kept down in their number to the level of their food. 'If one be killed in battle,' he says, 'it is a male, which has no lasting influence on their number. When they are seeking the means to satisfy their hunger, other animals fly before them, and are pursued, overtaken, and devoured; or should a larger animal not come in their way, they make a repast on the smaller, .. beetles, flies, and worms, forming, there is reason to believe, part of their food, as they do of the fox. So entirely are they masters of the forests, that it must be wholly deserted of other animals before they can suffer famine. The want of the means of subsistence, which Mr. Malthus contends prevents the increase of the human race, does not prevent the increase of beasts of prey; they are exempt from this check, which

neglected, it is danger, and ultimate destruction ; but if these duties be performed, population then

‘ rather militates against his theory. But if this be not the check to their
 ‘ increase, where is it to be found ? Are they unprolific ? Quite the re-
 ‘ verse ; beasts of prey seldom bring forth fewer than four young in a
 ‘ season. Are they short-lived ? No ; a lion, even when confined to a cage
 ‘ in an unfriendly climate, exposed to cruel treatment, lives many years ;
 ‘ the same remark holds good of other beasts of prey. Reasoning on
 ‘ the principles laid down by Mr. Malthus, we at once conclude that
 ‘ there is a constant struggle between the principle of increase and the
 ‘ means of subsistence, and that the most powerful and obvious checks
 ‘ cut off their redundant numbers. The population of America is
 ‘ doubled in twenty-five years ; but the principle of increase in beasts
 ‘ of prey is a hundred fold greater ; and neither vice, misery, nor
 ‘ moral restraint, in any of the ramifications through which Mr. Malthus
 ‘ traces them, oppose its progress ; .. it is stationary .. some appointment
 ‘ of nature unconsidered by Mr. Malthus must doubtless be the cause.
 ‘ There are laws which extend their influence through the universe,
 ‘ others are of particular and partial application ; of this description
 ‘ are those that relate to the various inhabitants and productions of the
 ‘ earth. In the same forest in which the lion and other beasts hold
 ‘ undisputed sway, and are prolific, the timid deer, a prey to every
 ‘ beast, with only one solitary fawn in a year, are far more numerous
 ‘ than them all.’

The argument is new and forcible, .. it strikes home. Of all Mr. Malthus's checks positive and checks preventive, there is more which is to stop the indefinite increase of beasts of prey. The solution is as ingenious as the question. ‘ All animals in which any particular faculty
 ‘ is carried to a high degree of acuteness, are with difficulty reared :
 ‘ of high-bred whelps more than half are cut off by a disease, which
 ‘ bears an evident analogy to hydrocephalus. What is true of domesticated animals will apply to beasts of prey, who surpass the most
 ‘ acute dogs in the very properties for which they are so highly prized.
 ‘ The least noise, the slightest sound, the smallest object, rouse them
 ‘ from sleep ; reasoning from strict analogy, it is highly probable their
 ‘ young, therefore, are subject to that deadly disease which a premature
 ‘ activity of the nervous system induces. It may be that this is the
 ‘ means by which those animals who limit the increase of all inferior
 ‘ ones are themselves limited in number by that presiding intelligence
 ‘ who hath numbered the very hairs of our head, and without whose
 ‘ knowledge not a sparrow falls to the ground.’

becomes security, power, glory, and dominion. All that is required to render it so is, that we should go to the ant and the bee, consider their ways and be wise: that we should learn from wise antiquity, . . . on this point indeed truly deserving to be styled so; that we should do our part in obedience to the first great commandment, which bids us 'Replenish the earth and subdue it.'

Let the reader cast a thought over the map, and see what elbow-room there is for England. We have Canada with all its territory, we have Surinam, the Cape Colony, Australasia, . . . countries which are collectively more than fifty-fold the area of the British isles, and which a thousand years of uninterrupted prosperity would scarcely suffice to people. It is time that Britain should become the hive of nations, and cast her swarms; and here are lands to receive them. What is required of government is to encourage emigration by founding settlements, and facilitating the means of transport. Imagine these countries, as they would be a few centuries hence, . . . and must be, if some strange mispolicy does not avert this proper and natural course of things, . . . the people enjoying that happiness and those domestic morals, which seem to proceed from no other root than the laws and institutions with which Providence has favoured us above all others; imagine these wide regions in the yet uncultivated parts of the earth flourishing like our own, and possessed by people enjoying our institutions and speaking our language. Whether they should be held in colonial dependence, *or become separate states, or when they may have ceased to depend upon the parent country, remain*

connected with her by the union of reverential attachment on one side, and common interests on both, is of little import upon this wide view of things. In America at this day, hostile America, unhappily alienated from her connection with England by our errors and the artifices of our common enemy, and now the wanton aggressor in a war undertaken in obsequiousness to that enemy, . . . still in America, whatever is civilized, whatever is intellectual, whatever is ennobling, whatever is good or great, is, and must ever be, of English origin.

‘ Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.’ This was the first great commandment given for collective society, and what country has ever been so largely empowered to act in obedience to it as England at this day ? The seas are ours, and to every part of the uninhabited or uncivilized world our laws, our language, our institutions, and our Bible may be communicated. Fear not, if these seeds be sown, but that God will give the increase ! Earthquakes may shake this island from its foundation, or volcanic eruptions lay it waste, or it may sink into the abyss and leave only rocks and shoals to mark its place ; (this earth bears upon it the monuments of wider physical devastation ;) . . . but earth itself must be destroyed before that from which Britain derives her pre-eminence can perish, if she do but enlarge herself, and send forth her blessings to the remotest parts of the globe.

ESSAY V.

ON

THE STATE OF THE POOR,

AND

THE MEANS PURSUED BY THE SOCIETY

FOR

BETTERING THEIR CONDITION.

1816.

ESSAY V.

ON THE STATE OF THE POOR,

&c. &c.

DURING many ages it was an undisputed opinion that the state of the world was continually growing worse, according to the complaint of Horace :

' Damnosa quid non imminuit dies ?

' Ætas parentum peior avis tulit

' Nos nequiores, mox daturos

' Progeniem vitiosiore.

It was even believed that the earth itself decayed as it grew old, and that nature in all her operations was debilitated with age. ' There have been ' many great inquests,' says Joshua Sylvester,

' To find the cause why bodies still grow less,

' And daily nearer to the pigmies' size.'

To confute this opinion, Hakewill wrote his ' Apology, or Declaration of the Power and ' Providence of God in the Government of the ' World.' Some of the good old archdeacon's topics may excite a smile in these times : he clears away doubts ' touching the strong physic which ' the ancients used,' and ' touching the length of ' the duodenum, or first gut,' which in the Greeks

was said to be twelve inches long, and in these degenerate days hardly four, an objection ‘ which, ‘ of any he had met with, was most fully opened ‘ and seriously urged by Archangelus Piccolomini ‘ in his Anatomical Lectures,’ . . . and which would evince that the happiness of an Athenian archon exceeded that of a London alderman in the proportion of three to one. And he proves that the human race was not less prolific in his age than in elder times, by the epitaph of Dame Honeywood, of Charing, in Kent, who had, at her decease, 367 children lawfully descended from her ; and by that of a woman in Dunstable Church ‘ who bore at three several times three children at ‘ a birth, and five at a birth two other times.’ But his moral philosophy is of a higher strain, and may command our respect both for its truth, and for the feeling with which he has expressed it.

‘ How other men,’ says he, ‘ may stand affected ‘ in reading I know not ; sure I am that in ‘ writing it often lifted up my soul in admiring ‘ and praising the infinite wisdom and bounty of ‘ the Creator in maintaining and managing his ‘ own work, in the government and preservation ‘ of the universe, which in truth is nothing else ‘ but (as the schools speak) *continuata productio*, ‘ a continued production : and often did it call ‘ to my mind those holy raptures of the Psalmist, ‘ “ O Lord, how glorious are thy works, and thy ‘ “ thoughts are very deep : an unwise man doth ‘ “ not well consider this, and a fool doth not understand it.” I must confess that, sometimes ‘ *looking stedfastly upon the present face of ‘ things both at home and abroad, I have often*

‘ been put to a stand, and staggered in mine
‘ opinion whether I were in the right or no: and
‘ perchance the state of my body, and present
‘ condition in regard of those fair hopes I some-
‘ time had, served as false perspective glasses to
‘ look through. But when again I abstracted and
‘ raised my thoughts to an higher pitch, and as
‘ from a vantage ground took a larger view, com-
‘ paring time with time, and thing with thing, and
‘ place with place, and considered myself as a
‘ member of the universe, and a citizen of the
‘ world, I found that what was lost to one part
‘ was gained to another, and what was lost to one
‘ time was to the same part recovered in another,
‘ and so the balance, by the Divine Providence
‘ overruling all, kept upright. *Qui ad pauca*
‘ *respicit de facili pronunciat*, saith Aristotle: he
‘ that is so narrow eyed as he looks only to his
‘ own person or family, to his own corporation
‘ or nation, or the age wherein himself lives, will
‘ peradventure quickly pronounce that all things
‘ decay and go backward, which makes men
‘ murmur and repine against God under the
‘ name of Fortune and Destiny. Whereas he
‘ that, as a part of mankind in general, takes a
‘ view of the *universal*, compares person with
‘ person, family with family, corporation with
‘ corporation, nation with nation, age with age,
‘ suspends his judgement, and upon examination
‘ clearly finds that all things work together for the
‘ best to them that love God.’

With this feeling, founded upon wise observa-
tion, and sustained by piety, did Hakewill combat
the then prevailing notion of the progressive de-

terioration of mankind. The stream of opinion took a different direction in the last century. A shallow and self-sufficient generation had then arisen, who proclaimed themselves to be the only philosophers; their metaphysical, moral, and political discoveries were offered to the world with all the impudence of quackery, and, like a quack's nostrums, they were received for a season with fatal confidence. That season is gone by: bitter disappointment has brought with it humility; we are now but too feelingly convinced that no violent and rapid melioration in society is possible, and that great and sudden changes are evils in themselves and in their consequences. But it is not the less certain that the general condition of the world may be greatly improved, and especially that part of it in the improvement of which we are most nearly concerned: it is not the less certain that of the moral and physical evils which afflict mankind, many, very many, are remediable; and that if any country be

* an unweeded garden

* That runs to seed,'

the fault lies in those who should cultivate it, not in the soil or climate.

A proud statement of the strength and prosperity of the British empire has lately been laid before the public; and although sums which ascend from hundreds of thousands of millions to billions look as if they were calculated in Portuguese *reis* rather than in pounds sterling, and seem at first to stagger or confound belief, the detail from which they are deduced is in many parts officially accurate, and, in all others, approximates to the reality; nor can

the general result be controverted that the wealth and power, and resources of this empire, form a phenomenon to which no parallel can be found in the history of the world. The public are indebted to Mr. Colquhoun also for another work, not less curious than this late important compilation, but leaving upon the reader's mind a very different impression, . . his treatise upon the Police of the Metropolis. That treatise lays open the extent to which crimes are carried in the huge capital of this mighty empire, . . a frightful extent, . . yet it relates only a part of the wickedness of the community, and that part only which is cognizable by human laws: how large a portion, then, remains untold! Of the poverty also which exists among us we have a faithful statement, as far as it can be expressed by numerical figures: the sum of existing wretchedness is not to be numbered; its intensity every man may estimate by what has fallen under his own notice, if he be not one of those who keep aloof from the contemplation of human misery; but its extent is known only to Him unto whom the prayers and the groans of the miserable ascend.

The solid, substantial, permanent welfare of a nation is not to be estimated by extent of dominion, or greatness of population, or amount of revenue, or of national wealth. This outward prosperity might be, like the antediluvian earth, such as Burnet has imagined it in his magnificent philosophical dream, a fertile and beautiful surface, . . but only a surface, . . only a crust which enveloped the waters of the abyss, and which never appeared more flourishing than at the moment

when, because of the iniquity of the inhabitants, the abyss was about to be broken up, and all things swept away by the foredoomed, inevitable, and avenging deluge. Is this our case? There is a tale in some ecclesiastical historian, of a youth, who, falling passionately in love with a beautiful woman, was, after long solicitation, admitted to her chamber, where she uncovered her bosom, and exposed to him an eating and consuming cancer. Is it thus with Britain also? Is she cancerous in her vital parts? They who believe in our political reformers would answer in the affirmative; and if the common weal were delivered over into the hands of these practitioners, they would prove the inveteracy of the disease by destroying the patient. With their knife of Radical Reform, and their Irish Catholicon, they would make quick work! A saner mind, a riper judgement, a sounder philosophy, would give a different reply. There are diseases in the body politic, but none which stand in need of the knife and the cautery. Diet is more needful than medicine; and where medicine is required, alteratives, not drastics, ought to be administered.

Since man has ceased to exist in the patriarchal state, . . . that golden age to which the earliest poets and the most widely-diffused traditions refer, . . . he has no where, nor at any period, existed in so favourable a condition as in England at this present time. The fine arts have been carried to higher perfection in Italy and in Greece; a far greater population has been supported in China and in the Netherlands; more magnificent works of public utility have been executed in the mo-

narchies and republics of antiquity; greater triumphs over physical circumstances have been obtained in the Low Countries, and in Egypt (which a Dutch traveller beheld with feelings of natural pleasure, because in many points of art and nature it appeared to him the Holland of the eastern world); in industry England has been rivalled by the Flemings and the Dutch; and in bold commercial enterprise she has been equalled, or, perhaps, surpassed, by Carthage in old time, and by Portugal in the age of her glory. But when everything is considered which contributes to the moral and intellectual improvement of the individual, and the general well-being of the community, certain it is that England stands alone, and is conspicuously blest above all countries either of the ancient or the modern world. The world, indeed, through all the evils with which it has been afflicted, has been progressive in good; but the insular situation of England, its geographical position, its laws, its institutions, its history, and the national character which these circumstances have combined to form, have made it, of all parts of the world, hitherto the most prosperous and the most happy.

But every stage of society brings with it its attendant evils; the body politic may be plethoric like the body natural: there is a state of prosperity which, like overfeeding, disposes the system for inflammatory diseases, or makes it break out in blains and blotches. As no political change, whether from peace to war, or from war to peace, can occur without immediate inconvenience and *injury to some branches of the community, far*

less can any material alteration of manners take place without some detrimental consequences, more or less dangerous in proportion as the class which is affected is more or less numerous. Now, that the change of manners which has taken place in England during the present reign is greater than was ever produced during the same number of years, in any known period of history, will appear manifest upon consideration. For although no event has occurred of equal magnitude to the discovery of America, and no invention like that of printing, society was not at that age organized as it is at present. The different classes of men, as they were then connected, might be compared to links in a chain, the blow which struck fire from those at the one end, or broke them in pieces, would produce no vibration at the other: the state is now more artificially and intimately combined; it resembles a spider's web, in which the slightest impact upon any one of the threads is felt throughout the whole. Probably more than a century elapsed before half the people in the old world learnt that a new one had been discovered: there was a time when, in the remoter parts of the British islands, the subjects knew not under what sovereign they lived; and the same habits and manners which had prevailed under Queen Elizabeth existed under Queen Anne. But now the rapid intercourse which commercial activity has created has given wings to fashion and folly, and the politics of Paris and of London are canvassed in every pot-house where *the English language* is spoken.

Let us, then, examine what are the classes of

society which have been injuriously affected during the great moral revolution of the last half century; this inquiry will lead us to consider what old evils have been diminished among us; what new ones have sprung up; what has been done towards diminishing the sum of human misery, and what remains to do in this great work, which is one of the worthiest employments of enlightened man.

The higher ranks are, in many respects, improved. That true nobility of feeling and intellect, as well as manners, which was found at the court of the Tudors, does not, indeed, peculiarly distinguish the nobles of the present age; this is because the circumstances of those times tended to produce a chivalrous exaltation of character; and because the advantages which were then confined to men of family are now open to the whole middle class, and the gentleman has risen to that honourable standing-ground which was formerly reserved for the knight and baron. Nor should it be forgotten that the Woodvilles, the Howards, the Sackvilles, the Sidneys, and the Grevilles of that age were gifted individuals, who, in any age, would have risen to the same height above their contemporaries. But the nobles of the present race have the advantage of their predecessors in one very material circumstance; . . though their heads may neither be so long, nor in all instances so well stored, the owners have the comfortable certainty of feeling them safe upon their shoulders. In reality there are but two great divisions of society in England, . . the educated and the uneducated. The former, whatever may be their *respective degrees upon the scale, necessarily par-*

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take the more decorous manners, and the increased humanity of an improving age. In what manner has the latter and larger division been affected?

A well graduated commonwealth has been aptly compared to a pyramid; the peasantry are its base; they are the most numerous of the uneducated classes: but, though the most prolific of the whole population, they are probably the least progressive in number, for the mortality in childhood is greater among them; it is from them that the large demands of war are chiefly supplied; and the continual and more extensive consumption of life which cities and manufactories require. If, however, their numbers had augmented in a much greater ratio than is actually the case, the far greater and appalling increase of the poor-rates in the agricultural counties would demonstrate that the condition of the peasantry, during the present reign, has been deteriorated; and that either the feeling of becoming pride has diminished, which formerly withheld them as long as possible from applying for parochial aid, or that the necessity which drives them to it has become more pressing. Both causes have co-operated; the moral evil results from the physical one; fellowship in degradation takes away the sense of shame, and the more claimants there are upon the eleemosynary funds which the law has provided, the more there will be... *‘Languescet alioqui industria, intendetur socordia si nullus ex se metus aut spes; et securi omnes aliena subsidia expectabant, sibi ignavi, nobis graves*.’*

‘The national debt,’ says Sir Thomas Bernard,

* Tacitus, Ann. l. 2.

‘ with all its magnitude of terror, is of little moment when compared with the increase of the poor-rates. In that instance, what is received from one subject, is paid in a greater part to another ; so that it amounts to little more than a rent-charge from one class of individuals to another. But the poor-rate is the barometer which marks, in all the apparent sunshine of prosperity, the progress of national weakness and debility ; and as trade and manufactures are extended, as our commerce encircles the terraqueous globe, it increases with a fecundity most astonishing ; it grows with our growth, and augments with our strength ; its root, according to our present system, being laid in the *vital source* of our existence and prosperity.’

This, however, is no new malady ; like causes have in other countries, and in this country at other times, produced similar effects ; though the effects have perhaps never existed in so great a degree as at present, nor has there been, in other instances, a barometer by which the degree could be ascertained as certainly as it is now by the poor-rates.

The great and rapid increase of national wealth has always been attended by a correspondent pressure of distress upon the peasantry. It was thus in Portugal when Joam III. succeeded his father Emanuel, the most fortunate prince that ever sat upon a European throne : he was master of Ormuz, of Goa, and of Malacca, in the East. . . thus commanding the whole trade of the Indian seas ; the gold mines of Africa sent in rich returns

to him, and the greater part of Morocco paid him tribute: to these treasures Joam III. succeeded, and never was there a period of greater national distress, arising from poverty, than at the commencement of his reign. It was thus in Spain, when ships came laden with silver and gold from Mexico and Peru..the fact was distinctly seen, and the cause distinctly stated by a contemporary writer *; the influx of specie produced a diminution in the value of money, and habits of lavish expenditure in the rich; rents were raised; all the necessaries of life advanced in price; the burden fell upon the poor; and of the wealth which poured into the country in full streams, all that reached them was in the shape of more abundant alms, which made them more dependent

* The 'Inca Garcilasso,' vol. ii. book i. c. 7. The passage is so remarkable, that I shall here quote it in part:.. '*Los que miran con otros ojos que los comunes, las riquezas que el Peru ha embiado al mundo viejo, y derramadolas por todo el, dicen que antes le han dañado que aprovechado; porque dizen—que si han crecido las rentas de los ricos, para que ellos vivan en abundancias y regalos, tambien han crecido las miserias de los pobres para que ellos mueran de hambre y desnudez; por la carestia que el mucho dinero ha causado en los mantenimientos y vestidos; que aunque sea pobremente ya los pobres el dia de oy, no se pueden vestir ni comer, por la mucha carestia, y que esta es la causa de aver tantos pobres en la republica, que mejor lo passavan quando no avia tanta moneda; que aunque entonces, por la falta della, eran las limosnas mas cortas que las de aora, les eran mas provechosas, por la mucha barata que avia en todo. De manera que concluyen con dezir que las riquezas del nuevo mundo, si bien se miran, no han aumentado las cosas necesarias para la vida humana (que son el comer, y el vestir, y por ende provechosas) sino en—carescidolas, y amugerado los hombres en las fuerças del entendimiento, y en las del cuerpo, y en sus trages, y habito y costumbres; y que con lo que antes tenian vivian mas contentos, y eran temidos de todo el mundo.*'

than they were before, without preventing them from being more miserable. These cases are clear and specific; an increase of national wealth produced an increase of poverty among the great body of the people; and these things were not accidentally co-existent;...they were cause and effect. The cases are also in point; Mr. Colquhoun's book shews that British industry and enterprise have produced wealth in as great abundance as the mines of Hispaniola and Peru, the gold of Africa, or the spices of the East.

The growing demands of government, and the growing luxury of the higher classes, produced a similar effect in the first years of our Reformation. The great distress of the peasantry in those times, and the rapid increase of mendicants, have been ascribed to the dissolution of the monasteries, whereby the sources of charity, to which the poor had been wont to apply, were suddenly dried up. 'I let pass,' says Sir William Barlowe, in his *Dialogue*, 'my Lord Cardinal's act in pulling down and suppressing religious places; our Lord assoil his soul! I will wrestle with no souls: he knoweth by this time whether he did well or evil. But this dare I be bold to say, that the countries where they stood found such lack of them, that they would he had let them stand. And think you, then, that there would be no lack found if the remnant were so served too? I ween men would so sore miss them, that many which speak against them would soon labour with their own hands to set them up again.' The loss of the alms which the monasteries used

to distribute must, however, have been an evil partial in its operation, and in itself insignificant ; the way in which the peasantry were injured at the Reformation, was by turning the abbey tenants over from the sort of parental tenure under which they then lived, to lay landlords, unconnected with them by any habits or hereditary feelings, who lived at a distance, and racked their tenants to support the expenses of a court life. As in the Highlands, at this time, Latimer complains that in tracts which formerly were well peopled, only a shepherd and his dog were to be found. Society cannot perhaps advance without passing through changes such as these ; but they produce immediate evil, and perilous consequences. In that age, as in this, great advances were made in civilization ; and changes of this kind can no more take place without derangement in the commonwealth, than any new functions in the animal frame can develop themselves without a feverish excitement of the system, and a tendency to diseases more or less dangerous. A fashion of ambitious expenditure prevailed, which made men live to the utmost of their means ; the exertions which were called forth to make the income keep pace with the outgoings, roused a spirit of enterprise which displayed itself both in evil and good ; commercial and privateering adventures were undertaken abroad ; at home, trades and professions raised their prices and their fees ; the manufacturer worsened his wares, the landholder increased his rents, and the lord inclosed what had before been *common ground*. Latimer, whose sermons are

full of information respecting the state of England in his days, repeatedly cries out against these things.

‘ I doubt,’ says the good old Bishop, ‘ most rich men have *too much*, for without *too much* we can get nothing. As for example: the physician . . if the poor man be diseased, he can have no help without *too much*; and of the lawyer the poor man can get no counsel, expedition, nor help in his matter, except he give him *too much*. At merchants’ hands no kind of ware can be had, except we give for it *too much*. You landlords, you rent-raisers’ (it should be remembered that he was preaching before the court), ‘ I may say, you step-lords, you unnatural lords, you have for your possessions yearly *too much*. For that here before went for twenty or sixty pounds by year, which is an honest portion to be had gratis in one lordship of another man’s sweat and labour, now is let for fifty or an hundred pounds by year. Of this *too much* cometh this monstrous and portentous dearth made by man, notwithstanding God doth send us plentifully the fruits of the earth, mercifully, contrary unto our deserts. Notwithstanding, *too much* which these rich men have, causeth such dearth, that poor men which live of their labour, cannot with the sweat of their face have a living; all kinds of victuals is so dear. . . pigs, geese, capons, chickens, eggs, &c.; these things, with others, are so unreasonably enhanced. And I think verily that if these continue, we shall at length be constrained to pay for a pig a pound.’

In another place he says,

Fuel is one of the first necessities in this climate; there was a time when it cost nothing more than the trouble of gathering it, in the greater part of England; its high price at present everywhere, except in the immediate vicinity of collieries and canals, is one evil to which the poor are subject now, and to which they were not subject in former times. They are worse fed than they were of old. When Peter Heylyn, in the beginning of Charles the First's reign, painted 'France to the life,' he described the condition of the peasantry in that country as very 'wretched and destitute.' 'Search their houses,' said he, 'and you shall find no butter salted up against winter, no powdering-tub, no pullein in the rick-barton, no flesh in the pot or at the spit. . . and, what is worse, no money to buy them. The best provision they can shew you, is a piece of bacon wherewith to fatten their pottage, and now and then the inwards of beasts killed for the Gentleman. But of their miseries, this me thinketh is the greatest, that growing so many acres of excellent wheat in the year, and gathering in such a plentiful vintage as they do, they should not yet be so fortunate as to eat white bread, or drink wine; . . the bread which they eat is of the coarsest flour, and so black that it cannot admit the name of brown; and as for their drink, they have recourse unto the next fountain.'

In speaking thus of the food of the French peasantry, the traveller manifestly writes as if his own countrymen in the same rank of life were *then* in a much better condition. Since that time, the diet of the whole English people has

been materially altered by the introduction of two articles of food. . . one from the East, and the other from the West; both which are in use in every cottage throughout the empire, . . both which have added greatly to the comfort and well-being of the community in general, but have become too exclusively the sustenance of the poor, . . tea and potatoes. In Ireland, where the introduction of potatoes has contributed so much to the rapid increase of population, a finer animal race is scarcely to be found than is produced upon this food; but the Irish poor have milk also, with which the English peasantry are very ill supplied; and when potatoes alone are depended upon, as is too much the case in England, a more comfortless or impoverishing diet is scarcely to be found. Tea, upon which the female poor chiefly subsist, is, by the warmth which it communicates and its stimulating effects, more exhilarating; but this also relieves the pain of hunger by mechanical distension more than it supplies the waste of nature by adequate sustenance*. 'It is a melancholy

* It is curious to see what dreadful properties were imputed to tea when its use was beginning to become general, and what dreadful consequences were anticipated from it. 'If we compare the nature of 'tea,' says a writer in the *Grub-street Journal*, 1737, 'with the nature of English diet, no one can think it a proper vegetable for us. 'It has no parts fit to be assimilated to our bodies: its essential salt 'does not hold moisture enough to be joined to the body of an animal: 'its oil is but very little, and that of the opiate kind, and therefore 'it is so far from being nutritive that it irritates and frets the nerves 'and fibres, exciting the expulsive faculty, so that the body may be 'lessened and weakened, but it cannot increase and be strengthened 'by it. But were it entirely wholesome as balsam or mint, it were 'yet mischief enough to have our whole populace used to sip warm 'water in a mincing, effeminate manner, once or twice every day.

'truth,' says Sir Thomas Bernard, 'and the concealment will prevent the correction of the evil, that the poor of England are not properly fed.' And to this truth every medical practitioner will bear witness.

X The improved system of farming has lessened the comforts of the poor. It has either deprived the cottager of those slips of land which contributed greatly to his support, or it has placed upon them an excessive and grinding rent. But as the comforts of the cottager are diminished, his respectability and his self-respect are diminished also, and hence arises a long train of evils. The practice of farming upon a great scale has unquestionably improved the agriculture of the country; better crops are raised at less expense: but in a national point of view, there is something more to be considered than the produce of the land and the profit of the landholders. The well-being of the people is not of less importance than the wealth of the collective body. By the system

'This mocks the strong appetite, relaxes the stomach, satiates it with trifling light nick-nacks which have little in them to support hard labour. In this manner the bold and brave become dastardly, the strong become weak, the women become barren, or, if they breed, their blood is made so poor, that they have not strength to suckle, and if they do, the child dies of the gripes. In short, it gives an effeminate weakly turn to the people in general. It is now become a part of the covenant with labouring servants truly, that they must be allowed tea for breakfast. If this unwholesome weed is not in some degree prohibited by the government, I can expect nothing less in one generation more, but that we must hire foreigners, as they do in Spain, to do our hard labour, or for the defence of the nation. I leave any one to guess what soldiers we are like to have.' *This writer imputes the political evils of the preceding twenty years to the use of tea.*

of adding field to field, more has been lost to the state than has been gained to the soil: the gain may be measured by roods and perches, . . but how shall the loss be calculated? The loss is that of a link in the social chain, . . of a numerous, most useful, and most respectable class, who, from the rank of small farmers, have been degraded to that of day-labourers. True it is, that the ground which they occupied is more highly cultivated. . . the crooked hedge-rows have been thrown down. . . the fields are in better shape and of handsomer dimensions. . . the plough makes longer furrows. . . there is more corn and fewer weeds; . . but look at the noblest produce of the earth. . . look at the children of the soil. . . look at the seeds which are sown here for immortality! Is there no deterioration there? Does the man stand upon the same level in society, . . does he hold the same place in his own estimation, when he works for another as when he works for himself; when he receives his daily wages for the sweat of his brow, and there the fruit of his labour ends, as when he enjoys day by day the advantage of his former toil, and works always in hope of the recompense which is always to come? The small farmer, or, in the language of Latimer and old English feeling, the yeoman, had his roots in the soil: . . this was the right English tree in which our heart of oak was matured. Where he grew up, he decayed: where he first opened his eyes, there he fell asleep. He lived as his fathers had lived before him, and trained up his children in the same way. The daughters of this class of men were brought up in habits of industry and fru-

gality, in good principles, hopefully and religiously, and with a sense of character to support. Those who were not married to persons of their own rank, were placed in service; and hence the middle ranks were supplied with that race of faithful and respectable domestic servants, the diminution and gradual extinction of which is one of the evils (and not the least) that have arisen from the new system of agriculture. One of the sons succeeded, as a thing of course, to the little portion of land which his fathers had tenanted from generation to generation. If among the boys there was one of a studious turn, he became the schoolmaster of the village; or by help of endowed schools, and the wise provision which our pious ancestors made for such cases in the Universities, or perhaps the occasional bounty of a liberal patron, he was bred up for holy orders; and as in these cases natural aptitude and the strong desire alone were consulted, it was from among such persons that the Church received the greater part of its ablest and most distinguished members. The sense of family pride and family character was neither less powerful nor less beneficial in this humble rank, than it is in the noblest families when it takes its best direction. But old tenants have been cut down with as little remorse and as little discrimination as old timber, . . . and the moral scene is in consequence as lamentably injured as the landscape!

★ If the small farmer did not acquire wealth, he kept his station. The land which he had tilled with the sweat of his brow, while his strength lasted, supported him when his strength was

gone : his sons did the work when he could work no longer ; he had his place in the chimney-corner, or the bee-hive chair : and it was the light of his own fire which shone upon his grey hairs. Compare this with the old age of the day-labourer, with parish allowance for a time, and the parish workhouse at last ! He who lives by the wages of daily labour, and can only live upon those wages, without laying up store for the morrow, is spending his capital ; a time must come when it will fail ; in the road which he must travel, the poor-house is the last stage on the way to the grave. Hence it arises, as a natural result, that looking to the parish as his ultimate resource, and as that to which he must come at last, he cares not how soon he applies to it. There is neither hope nor pride to withhold him : why should he deny himself any indulgence in youth, or why make any efforts to put off for a while that which is inevitable at the end ? That the labouring poor feel thus, and reason thus, and act in consequence, is beyond all doubt ; and if the landholders were to count up what they have gained by throwing their estates into large farms, and what they have lost by the increase in the poor-rates, of which that system has been one great cause, they would have little reason to congratulate themselves on the result. The system which produces the happiest moral effects will be found also most beneficial to the interest of the individual and to the general weal : upon this basis the science of political economy will rest at last, when the ponderous volumes with which it

has been overlaid shall have sunk by their own weight into the dead sea of oblivion.

If it be allowable to give political application to a sacred metaphor, hope may be called the salt of the earth; it is the preserving principle without which the faculties of the individual stagnate and decay, and social bodies corrupt and go to dissolution. The 'improved system' in great measure deprives the lower class of agriculturists of this impulse and support. While small farms existed, the labouring husbandman might look on to one as the reward of his industry and good character; . . it was for him the attainable point of hope, but it exists for him no longer; the step has been taken from the ladder, and when he looks upward now there is a gap in the scale, which no exertion on his part can possibly surmount. Is there no evil in this to the state as well as to the individual? When hope leaves the mind, discontent enters it; and where that evil spirit is in possession, it is not long before 'he taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself.' The harrow has gone over the ground, and they who sow disaffection, sedition, and insurrection, find it ready for the baneful seed. With what success those seeds have been scattered by the apostles of anarchy, who are never weary in ill-doing, recent events may prove. Possibly those events might not have occurred, certainly they could not have occurred to the same extent, if the 'improved system' had not destroyed the small farms . . if great cultivators, like *Aaron's rod*, had not swallowed up the small

farmers. The men who grow corn are never the men who set fire to it. A large proportion of the misled multitude who have been burning barns and corn-stacks, would have been aiding the civil power to repress these frantic outrages, if they had had their own little property to defend. Let us not deceive ourselves! governments are safe in proportion as the great body of the people are contented, and men cannot be contented when they work with the prospect of want and pauperism before their eyes, as what must be their destiny at last. If you would secure the state from within as well as from without, you must better the condition of the poor.

In the natural course of things, the peasantry are as strongly attached to a government which protects them, and frets them with no vexatious interference (be that government in other respects good or ill), as a Highland clan to their hereditary chief, or the vassals of old to their immediate lord, when by his personal qualities he deserved their attachment. Of this we have two memorable instances in La Vendée and in Spain. La Vendée is a country of small farms; the peasantry there were contented with their lot; they were well instructed according to their church (erroneous and idolatrous as that church is) by the parochial clergy; and never was a nobler spirit of loyalty exhibited by any race of men than they displayed in defence of the throne and the altar. 'The anarchy which ravaged France,' says the Count de Puisaye, 'owed its first successes to the wretchedness, the corruption, and the fury of the populace of its towns. It might have been

‘checked in its progress by the courage of the inhabitants of the country. These two classes, of which the one is everywhere the vilest, as the other is the most useful of society, constitute that part of the people in which the physical strength of the state resides. When they are united, nothing is capable of resisting them; opposed one to the other, everything will be to the advantage of the peasantry, if they are well conducted. There is but one thing common to them . . . the ignorance of the one, and the simplicity of the other, render them equally susceptible of enthusiasm; but as that enthusiasm cannot have the same principles, so neither can it have the same objects. The peasantry give themselves up to a good impulse with the same facility as the town populace let themselves be led away to evil. The one, being discontented with their lot, are always ready for insurrection, in the hope of changing it; the other, submitting to their station, decide coolly, but will resist for the sake of keeping themselves as they are. From the habit of that submission arise the perseverance and tenacity which are peculiar to them. Here, restlessness, chagrin, and discomfort produce an opposition of interests and ideas, . . . envy, suspicion, indiscipline, and disorder; there, the sense of a common interest in the benefits of a simple and virtuous education, and the instinct of revering that which is above human nature, guarantee confidence, union, subordination, and regularity.’ In the condition of low and rustic life,’ says Wordsworth, ‘the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their

‘ maturity.’ In the circumstances and feelings of this class he has found materials for poetry of a high order: our readers need not be reminded of the disquisitions upon this subject with which the periodical press has been persecuted by critics of all dimensions, from the undergraduate in the ungentle craft, who fires his first pop-gun at a conspicuous mark, to the Scotch professor, who for fifteen years has been discharging his blunderbuss against a shield from whence the leaden shot falls flattened. But that this philosophic poet has rightly estimated the native character of the peasant, is strongly proved by M. de Puisaye’s testimony to the virtues of the peasantry in France. ‘ It is almost exclusively,’ says he, ‘ in that class of men whom riches had not corrupted, and whom *philosophism* had not deprived of the support of religion, that I have found at all times sentiments of fidelity, of discretion, and of devotedness carried even to heroism. The apparatus of punishment, and the blow of death suspended over their heads, could never intimidate them.’

These high moral qualities exist in a virtuous peasantry, and are called forth like latent heat, when put to the test. In the natural course of things they should be the most contented part of the community: when they are otherwise, that course has been influenced by some disturbing causes. One main cause has been indicated in the present state of society, which, by rendering agriculture a branch of great commercial speculation, has worsened the general condition of the agricultural class. Another is to be found in the

efforts of political faction, and the very different degree of zeal with which good and evil principles are inculcated among them. The good instruction which they receive is limited to what they may gather at church from a weekly sermon... (it is of *direct* instruction that we are speaking)... upon this cold and meagre diet faith could not be kept alive, if it had not in itself a principle of vitality which is almost indestructible. Any other religious instruction that may reach the peasantry comes from the Methodists, or from the Dissenters, and brings with it a proud spirit of contempt for the clergy, and of hostility towards the establishment. Let us now see in what manner their political lessons are inculcated. Every village has its alehouse, and most villages have two or three. Every alehouse has its newspaper, and a large majority of newspapers are enlisted against the government. The factious journalists are in opposition to their country during times of war, and to the government of the country at all times. True to this spirit of opposition, and to this alone, they advance with the same vehemence any principle which may suit their immediate purpose, blind to, or heedless of the grossest and most palpable self-contradictions. But self-contradictions matter little: they address themselves to the discontented, the unthinking, and the uninstructed; . . the most senseless declamation, the most shameless misrepresentation, will pass current in the tap-room, and by the alehouse fire; . . and the journalist poisons the minds of the populace with his weekly *dose of sedition*, while the distiller is poisoning *their livers* with ardent spirits, or the brewer is

inducing diseases not less formidable with his decoction of quassia and *cocculus indicus*. They who join at church in supplications that the Lord will deliver us from all sedition, listen at the alehouse to the weekly epistles of the apostles of sedition with the implicit faith of honest simplicity, at a time too when their animal feelings are in a pleasurable state from the warmth of a cheerful fire, the sense of comfort which is produced by rest after labour, the excitement of company, and of deleterious liquor; . . . their pores are open, and the whole infection is taken in.

According to the anarchists, government is the root of all the evils which afflict the country, and the cure of all those evils is political reform. In faithful imitation of the French . . . untaught by their errors, and undeterred by their crimes and their punishment. . . they proclaim that, for a nation to be reformed, it is sufficient that she wills it; and the hopeful end at which they are aiming is to make the multitude declare this their sovereign will and pleasure. God help the simple understandings of men who suppose that the condition of the people can be meliorated by means like these, and that the fear of the mob is the beginning of wisdom in a government! And God forgive the deliberate guilt of those who perseveringly endeavour to make the mob sensible of their strength, and breathe into them their own spirit of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness! Among the manufacturing populace they have been but too successful; they have laboured not without success among the agricultural part of the people; and if the army

and navy are not discontented also, it is not their fault.

‘The people,’ says Bishop Warburton, ‘are much more reasonable in their demands on their patriots than on their ministers: of their patriots they readily accept the will for the deed; but of their ministers they unjustly interpret the deed for the will.’ In these times we could not desire a more favourable interpretation: . . . ‘by their fruits ye shall know them.’ The foreign policy of our government has been such that more signal successes could not have been anticipated or desired, than have actually been attained; and in domestic concerns its acts may be appealed to as the best indication of its intentions. It is indeed impossible that in any enlightened part of Europe a government can be so behind-hand with the age, as not to know that the security of the state depends upon the well-being and contentment of the people. The conduct of Ferdinand, in Spain, is no exception, for Spain is not an enlightened country: and moreover, the acts which excited most indignation in England are popular among the great majority of that noble-minded, but bedarkened nation: the restoration of the Inquisition was their own work; and when Ferdinand formally re-established it, he only ratified what they had spontaneously done. Buonaparte’s conduct is just such an exception as proves the rule. Ambition had intoxicated him, and the possession of absolute power had produced in him that specific moral madness of which so many cases were seen among the Roman and Greek emperors: he sought to reign by force and delu-

sion, and to make the nations of Europe the mere instruments of his selfish and wicked will ; but in attempting this he acted in opposition to the spirit of the age, and was overthrown. He condescended to it during his short usurpation, when he abolished the Slave Trade. The general spirit of the age is good, both abroad and at home. The Christian Treaty, as it is called, however nugatory it may be deemed, is one memorable instance. The Pope also affords another : . . he has restored the Jesuits, but he has prevented the Inquisition from roasting a relapsed Jew. The Portuguese have abolished the Inquisition at Goa, and are taking measures for abolishing it in Portugal. This spirit, which exists strongly in every country where public opinion is known, exists with most strength in England, where public opinion is more decidedly expressed. There is an ardent desire of diminishing the evils of the world, as far as our efforts can contribute to their diminution, in other countries and in our own. The abolition of the Slave Trade . . the abolition of infanticide in part of our great Indian empire . . the various missions, which are so liberally supported, in the East, in Africa, and in Polynesia, and the strong feeling which has been excited here by the first symptoms of a Catholic persecution in France, . . evince the prevalence and the power of this desire, so honourable to the age, so honourable to England, and to human nature.

The Romanists used to reproach us with our inattention to the duty of disseminating the religion which we profess ; and they asserted* that

* *Maratori's language is curious : . . ' Cerchisi pure fra le sette del*

missionary zeal could only proceed from the Spirit of God, and therefore it could be found in the Roman Catholic church alone. This reproach, which was at one time deserved, holds good no longer; and the Protestant missionaries of the present age will be found to equal their Romish predecessors in zeal and disinterestedness*, and to excel them in erudition. They reproached us, also, with a decay of charity, in consequence of the Reformation; affirming that no monuments of durable benevolence had been erected like the convents, hospitals, colleges, and other religious foundations, with which England was enriched by the piety of our Catholic ancestors before the schism. But here they exult without a cause; the establishment of schools, hospitals, alms-houses, and eleemosynary societies, of various descriptions in London, will be found to exceed in number and in extent the

** moderni eretici; non vi si troverà questa specie di eroica carità....*

** Ma questo nobil ardore non si può aspettar altronde, che da quel divin*

** Spirito, il quale infiamma al bene i cuori de' Fedeli, nè trovarsi altrove*

** che nella vera Chiesa di Dio; e perciò dee dirsi un contrasegno anch'*

** esso, che questa è la legittima Sposa di Gesù Cristo, conservatrice dello*

** spirito de' primi Cristiani, e tuttavia feconda di Apostoli e di Martiri,*

** come fu la primitiva chiesa.'.. It is remarkable that he has not spoken*

of miracles as well as martyrs. The reports of the Protestant missions

are now more than equal in bulk to the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*;

and in the whole of them there is not one miracle. Bishop Milner

would say this is a proof that ours is not the true church; on the

contrary, it proves satisfactorily that his is a lying one.

* It is not, perhaps, generally known that each of the three elder missionaries at Serampore (Dr. Carey, Dr. Marshman, and Mr. Ward) contribute to the support of the mission the whole of their incomes, beyond what is sufficient for a bare subsistence; and that the sums thus contributed are not less than 1500*l.* a year from each. These are the men who were reviled, but a few years ago, in the worst spirit of scurrility, for the lowness of their origin!

charitable institutions of any other city in Europe: not to mention that the history of the world affords nothing similar to the provision which the legislature has made for the poor in England. Of these institutions the five royal hospitals, as they are called, (St. Bartholomew's, Bedlam, Bridewell, Christ's Hospital, and St. Thomas's,) were originally endowed from the church and convent lands; the rest are all Protestant foundations. To give the briefest account of these, or even to enumerate them, would require more space than can here be allotted to that purpose; suffice it to say, that more than 30,000 patients are annually admitted into the London hospitals; that about 15,000 children receive the benefit of gratuitous education; that about 1300 persons are supported in endowed alms-houses; and that the sums which are annually disposed of in charitable uses by the several companies and halls in London, amounted, in Maitland's time, to more than 26,000*l*.

But among the numerous associations which have in late years been formed for benevolent purposes, there is one whose proceedings are entitled to particular notice. . . the Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor. This society originated twenty years ago with the Bishop of Durham, Mr. Wilberforce, Sir Thomas Bernard, and the Honourable Edward James Eliot. The latter was early removed from a world which his talents and his example were alike fitted to adorn and to amend; the three former names need no panegyric. The general object of the society was to collect information *respecting the actual situation of the poor, and the*

most effectual means of improving it. They proposed to apply the principle of experimental philosophy to this object, and to make 'existing facts' the means of practical and systematic investigation into what has really augmented their virtue and happiness, and has been sanctioned by use and experience.' The inquiry has been conducted patiently, and without ostentation. Instead of coming forward with cumbrous theories, or presenting crude plans to the legislature, they have collected facts, tried such limited experiments as were in their power, and laid their observations before the public, as materials from which every man may draw the conclusion. The conclusions which every sane mind must draw from the premises thus laid before it, are truly consolatory: it appears that more may be done by well disposed and active individuals, than could be effected by legislative interference; that little exertion, and less expense, if wisely directed, may produce much good; that the poor are well disposed to second the efforts which are made for their advantage, whenever they understand the benefit; and that the lower classes become improved in other respects in proportion to the improvement of their circumstances.

The advocates for radical reform assert, that as the weight of taxation makes every thing dear, government is thus the direct cause of the distress of the poor. This assertion being continually repeated as a political axiom, and involving in the first part of its proposition a certain degree of *truth*, produces much of the mischief which it is *intended* to produce. Fools! who would begin

to repair the pyramid from the top instead of the bottom ! Taxation affects the poor in an infinitely trifling degree compared to the tax which is laid upon their poverty by individual cupidity. ' It is ' but too obvious,' says Dr. Glass, ' how much the ' poor are imposed upon by the petty shopkeepers ' in the necessaries which they are enabled to ' purchase. The *quality* of the goods is not the ' best, the *price* is extravagantly high, and the ' *quantity* is reduced by deceitful weights and a ' scanty measure.' It appeared, upon a strict inspection of weights and scales, in a small and by no means a populous district, that the loss which the poor of that district sustained from this cause, or, in other words, the money thus fraudulently raised from them, amounted to not less than 500*l.* a year. Sir Thomas Bernard asserts, that the injury which the poor sustain from buying their flour at the shop instead of the mill, was nearly equal, at the time when he wrote (1798), to two-thirds of all the poor's-rates then collected in England. This latter evil has, in some instances, been removed by the establishment of parish mills; the former requires only that the existing laws should be duly enforced; and when the weights and measures of the country are taken into consideration by parliament, it is to be hoped that means will be provided for rendering those laws efficacious. These grievances, which fall with peculiar weight upon the poor, arise from that eagerness for gain, which is the sin that most easily besets a commercial people, and which, perhaps, has never been so generally prevalent as at present. In this point, God

knows, the country stands truly in need of radical reform ; but it is a reformation which cannot be effected by laws or by political changes ; it must be in public opinion ; in the habits of thought and the principles of action. There is a memorable passage upon this subject in one of Mr. Windham's speeches : . . . ' The whole country, ' it is said, is full of abuses from top to bottom. ' I believe so ; with this correction, that the description would be more just if we were to say ' from bottom to top, it being here, as in other ' *media*, the parts of which are left to move freely, ' that the lower *strata* are the denser and grosser, ' and that they become rarer and purer the higher ' you ascend. . . The fact is, that when the matter ' comes to be searched to the bottom, it is the ' people throughout who are cheating the people ; ' the people individually cheating the people collectively. . . The people, in all quarters, and by ' all opportunities, are preying upon the public ; ' and then make it the reproach of the government ' that it has not the power to prevent them.' . . Well does Sir Thomas Bernard lay it down as an axiom, that no plan for the improvement of the condition of the poor will be of any avail, unless the foundation be laid in the melioration of their moral and religious character. The exactions of which we have been speaking, are those to which the poor are subjected by persons of their own class, or who are just rising above it ; but the spirit which occasions these petty frauds extends far higher : it is found not only in the little shop-keeper, who curtails his measures, falsifies his weights, and exacts a dear price for bad commo-

dities, or in the mistress of a dairy, who mingles water with her milk before she sells it out to those, perhaps, who will dilute it still further; but to the brewer, who procures his materials from the druggist instead of the maltster; to the druggist who adulterates the material which he sells him; and to the rich manufacturer, who makes flimsy goods for foreign sale, thus, for the sake of his own immediate gain, inflicting lasting injury upon his country, by injuring the character of English commodities.

Let it not be supposed that any indiscriminate censure upon the commercial classes is intended; nor that the censure applies to those classes exclusively. The landlord who exacts a grinding rent for the labourer's cottage, may think himself less culpable than the fraudulent tradesman, because he offends against no law of the land: but he sins against a higher law, and in proportion as he lessens the comforts and increases the necessities of the poor, he does evil and occasions evil. Some years ago a traveller, who took shelter from a storm in a cottage by one of the Scotch lakes, saw that the rain ran in and lay in pools upon the uneven floor, which consisted only of the bare earth on which the hovel had been built; during great part of the year, therefore, the floor must necessarily be wet and dirty, making it both uncomfortable and unwholesome. He observed to the owner with how little trouble the inconvenience might be removed; the man shook his head, and answered, it was very true, but that if he were to do this, the cottage would be thought worth more for having been made comfortable, and the rent would in consequence be

raised. Such cases may be unusual, and we believe indeed that they must be so ; but it is certain that high rents are common, and it is not less certain that they aggravate the poverty of the poor. Another, and perhaps greater evil, is the difficulty with which the cottagers can obtain some little land ; the grievance was long since pointed out by Mr. Kent : . . ‘ when the cottagers,’ he said, ‘ are accommodated with a small quantity of land, they are obliged to pay at least a double proportion of rent for it, to what the farmers pay themselves.’ Upon this point, the facts which have been collected by the Society, led Sir T. Bernard to conclude, that the possession of arable land is hurtful to the cottager ; but that his condition is most materially improved by possessing a garden and grass-land for one or two cows. The experiment has been extensively tried by the Earl of Winchelsea ; . . there are from seventy to eighty labourers upon his estates in Rutlandshire, who keep from one to four cows each ; and of all his tenants these men are the most punctual with their rents. Lord Winchelsea asserts, from experience, that nothing is so beneficial, both to them and the landholders, as this system ; that the labourers and their families, living better, are consequently more able to endure labour ; that they are contented with their situation, and attached to it ; that having acquired a sort of independence, which makes them set a higher value upon their character, they are generally considered in the neighbourhood as men the most to be depended upon *and trusted* ; that feeling the advantage of *possessing a little*, their industry is excited by hope ;

and that when a labourer has obtained a cow, and land sufficient to maintain her, his next thought is to save money enough for buying another. The experiment was tried also in Wiltshire, in a parish containing 140 poor persons, divided into thirty-two families, chiefly employed as labourers in husbandry. Having suffered greatly during the high price of provisions in 1801, it was proposed to them that they should make an effort to better their circumstances, and occupy, at a fair rent, such a quantity of land as each family could cultivate without improperly interfering with their usual labour, and could keep well manured; the land was to be forfeited if they received any relief from the parish, except medical assistance, or under the militia laws. The proposal was gladly accepted by all who could possibly accept it; and the consequence was that the poor-rates, which, in the last six months before the experiment was made, had amounted to 212*l.* 16*s.*, amounted, three years afterwards, in the six corresponding months of winter, to 12*l.* 6*s.* Some part of this great difference is, of course, attributable to the scarcity in the first year; but the fact that all these families had before been chargeable to the parish, and that none of them were chargeable after they had been thus enabled to assist themselves, proves incontrovertably that no better means can be devised for improving the condition of the agricultural poor. The utmost quantity of land thus leased was an acre and a half, of which a fourth part in winter was planted with potatoes; the rest was in corn, or in garden cultivation; and this experiment *shews* that even arable land is not always hurtful

to the cottager. Of all means of improving his condition, this has been found the most beneficial; . . the children are thus educated to husbandry, to the care of cattle, and the management of the dairy; while they are thus healthfully and usefully brought up, they are better fed; the father employs those hours in hopeful and therefore willing occupation, which would otherwise be idly or injuriously spent, and finds such solid satisfaction at the close of day by his own fire-side, that the alehouse holds out no temptation to him; and the mother has that enjoyment in her offspring, which, in the right order of things, has been appointed by a benevolent Creator, instead of feeling, as is too often the unnatural state of the miserably poor, that their existence is burthensome to their parents, and calamitous for themselves.

The individual Christian, if he truly deserves that name, will ever bear in mind a humiliating sense of the evil propensities of fallen humanity, as a motive for vigilance over his own heart, and for charity towards the offences of others. But it is the business of governments to regard the bright side of human nature; the better they think of mankind the better they will find them, and the better they will make them. It is well known that in the middle and higher walks of life, men in general bear adverse fortune more wisely than they bear prosperity: one reason for this is, that these opposite states call into action the same principle; and pride, which makes man *insolent* or *arrogant* in the one situation, is in the *other* chastened and refined, till it becomes a

virtue. The wisest and the best minds have received their painful education in the school of adversity: but if adversity be favourable to the developement of our virtues, (and indeed many of our noblest qualities would never be developed under any other discipline,) there is a degree of misery which is fatal to them, and which hardens the heart as much as coarse manual labour indurates the skin, and destroys all finer sense of touch. Among savages, those tribes have ever been found the most unfeeling who possess the fewest comforts, and have the most difficulty in obtaining food; for when self-preservation becomes the prime concern, the natural charities are starved; a brutish selfishness occupies the whole heart, and man, having no instinct to supply the absence of his human affections, becomes worse than the beasts. Mournful as this is, it is far more mournful to contemplate the effects of extreme poverty in the midst of a civilized and flourishing society. The wretched native of Terra del Fuego, or of the northern extremity of America, sees nothing around him which aggravates his own wretchedness by comparison; the chief fares no better than the rest of the horde, and the slave no worse than the master; the privations which they endure are common to all, they know of no state happier than their own, and submit to their miserable circumstances as to a law of nature. But in a country like ours, there exists a contrast which continually forces itself upon the eye and upon the reflective faculty. There was a Methodist dabbler in art, who, in the days of our childhood, used to edify the public with

allegorical prints from the great manufactory of Carrington Bowles ; one of these curious compositions represented a human figure, of which the right side was dressed in the full fashion of the day, while the left was undressed to the very bones, and displayed a skeleton. The contrast in this worse than Mezentian imagination is not more frightful than that between wealth and squalid pauperism, who are every day jostling in our streets.

From the moment when any man begins to think that

' The world is not his friend, nor the world's law,'

the world and the world's law are likely to have that man for their enemy ; and if he does not commence direct hostilities against them, he abandons himself to despair, and becomes a useless if not a hurtful member of the community. Attempts to reclaim him by penal statutes are worse than unavailing ; they provoke that spirit of stubbornness which oftentimes is only the disease that ill treatment and untoward circumstances produce in a noble disposition. You might as well attempt to stop the progress of contagion, by punishing all who are affected by the baneful principle in the air, as to remedy poverty by penal laws against the poor. Children may sometimes be reformed by punishment, but even for children it is the clumsiest and worst means of reformation. Men must be led to their duty, not driven to it. You may *deter* them from doing what is criminal, but *you cannot* compel them to do what is right : or

if the right thing is done by compulsion, the right will will have been wanting.

‘Laws,’ says Sir Thomas Bernard, ‘have been made to *compel* industry and economy, and workhouses have been erected, and *farmed* to the best bidder, in order to deter the poor from wanting relief; but parishes and parish officers have not as yet been aware that in every instance in which a poor family is driven by distress to take refuge in a workhouse, an incumbrance has been entailed on the funds of the parish never to be redeemed, even in part, except by a change of system; by *encouraging* that industry and prudence which no act of parliament can *compel*, and by assisting them with increased means and advantages of life, calculated to enable them to support themselves and their families in their own cottages without parochial relief.’

What reason would teach us to conclude, and what benevolence would induce us to hope, is in these instances abundantly proved by experience. Men are easily led to their duty. ‘A child,’ says the Eastern proverb, ‘may lead the elephant by a single hair.’ Try the effect of good will and hope upon the man who has wrapt himself in the covering of a reckless and stubborn despair, and you will see verified the old apologue of the sun, and the wind, and the traveller. His heart will open like a flower that closes at night, and expands its petals to the morning sun. The better parts of his nature will be put forth like the tendrils of the sea-anemone, when it feels the first wave of the returning tide upon its rock. A beautiful instance of the effect of kindness upon a

most hopeless subject is related by Mr. Weyland ; and it would be doing injustice to the able and benevolent author to give it in any other language than his own.

‘ I have seen a poor deformed cripple in a
‘ work-house attain his 20th year with not a
‘ spark of moral culture, with ears through which
‘ the accents of kindness and encouragement
‘ were never directed to his heart ; the object of
‘ complete neglect, if not of scorn and contempt,
‘ to all by whom he was surrounded. His mind,
‘ not highly endowed by nature, completely
‘ blunted by hard usage, approached to idiocy,
‘ and his countenance exhibited a mixture of
‘ sullenness, envy, and despair. I have seen this
‘ miserable object taken by the hand of a benevo-
‘ lent individual, his rags exchanged for decent
‘ clothing, *strange* words of kindness and en-
‘ couragement addressed to his astonished ear, a
‘ spelling-book placed in his hand, his steps di-
‘ rected to a sunday-school, and flattering appro-
‘ bation bestowed upon his earnest but quite abor-
‘ tive efforts to learn to read. Although little
‘ actual knowledge was imparted, a more complete
‘ moral revolution was never observable in man.
‘ The eye, before dejected, was lighted up with joy
‘ and hope ; the countenance, distorted with envy
‘ and furrowed with the deep lines of despair, re-
‘ laxed into a cheerful smile ; an interest for his
‘ own improvement was excited in his mind, and
‘ kept alive by the consciousness that his benefactor
‘ *cared for him*. The smile of pleasure, with
‘ *which that benefactor* was constantly greeted,
‘ *imparted a joy* only to be equalled by his hum-

‘ ble thankfulness for having been the instrument
‘ of such a change in the heart of a fellow-crea-
‘ ture. But if these were his feelings as a phi-
‘ lanthropist and a Christian, I think that he
‘ might also fairly indulge some sense of gratifi-
‘ cation as a *politician*. The dirty and vicious
‘ habits, to which this poor creature was formerly
‘ a prey, were far from incapacitating him from
‘ becoming the father of a family as wretched and
‘ denuded as himself. He would have been satis-
‘ fied to lie down with his partner in the hovel of
‘ a workhouse, and to pullulate without controul.
‘ But feelings of decency and self-respect have
‘ now induced better habits. His mind is di-
‘ verted towards objects more remote from the
‘ brutal part of his nature, and it is probable that
‘ he will, at least, become a harmless if not a use-
‘ ful member of society.’ *—pp. 344, 345.

The Society have collected some valuable examples of what may be effected by willing industry, when there is hope to encourage it. A tenant of Mr. Way’s, in Suffolk, died, leaving a widow with fourteen children, the eldest of whom was a girl under fourteen years of age: he had rented fourteen acres of pasture land on which he kept two cows; these cows, with his little furniture and clothing, were all the property he left. The parish of which he had been an inhabitant was within the district of an incorporated house of industry, where the rule was to receive proper objects within the walls, but not to allow anything

* An instance of a similar kind occurred in the Male Asylum at Madras, where the new system of education originated, and was carried to its full perfection.

for the out poor, except in peculiar cases. The directors of this establishment offered to relieve the widow by taking her seven youngest children into the house. It may be difficult to say what system of affording relief to the poor is best, but this may be affirmed without hesitation, that whatever system tends to weaken the domestic affections by separating child from parent, is radically bad. When this was proposed to the widow, she replied in great agitation that she would rather die in working to maintain her children, than part with any of them; or she would go with all of them into the house and work for them there;..but if her landlord would continue her in the farm (as she called it), she would undertake to bring up the whole fourteen without any help from the parish. She was a strong woman, about forty-five years old, and of a noble spirit; happily too she had to deal with a benevolent man. He told her she should continue the tenant, and hold the land for the first year rent-free; and at the same time, unknown to her, he directed his receiver not to call upon her afterwards, thinking that even with that indulgence it would be a great thing if she could maintain so large a family. But this further liberality was not needed. She brought her rent regularly every year after the first; held the land till she had placed twelve of the fourteen children in service, and then resigned it to take the employment of a nurse, which would enable her to provide for the remaining two for the little time longer that they needed support, *and which was more suited to her declining years.* *Had the seven children been sent to the House*

of Industry, they would have cost the parish scarcely less than seventy pounds a year: and the widow and the other children also, had she been deprived of the land, would in all likelihood have soon required parochial support.

Twenty years ago there stood a small cottage by the road side, near Tadcaster, which for its singular beauty, and the neatness of its little garden, attracted the notice of every traveller. The remarkable propriety which appeared in every part of this tenement, made Sir Thomas Bernard curious to learn the history of the owner, and he obtained it from his own mouth. Britton Abbot (such was the owner's name) was a day-labourer: beginning to work with a farmer at nine years old, and being careful and industrious, he had saved nearly 40*l.* by the time that he was two-and-twenty. With this money he married and took a farm at 30*l.* a year, . . . but the farm was too much for his means, and before the end of the second year he found it necessary to give it up, having exhausted almost all his little property. He then removed to a cottage, where with two acres of land and his right of common, he kept two cows, and lived in comfort for nine years; at the expiration of that time the common was inclosed, and he had to seek a new habitation with six children, and his wife ready to lie-in again. In this state he applied to Mr. Fairfax, and told him that if he would let him have a little bit of ground by the road side 'he would shew him the *fashions* on it.' The slip of land for which he asked was exactly a rood; Mr. Fairfax, after inquiring into his character, suffered him to have it; the neighbours

lent him some little assistance in the carriage of his materials; he built his house, inclosed the ground with a single row of quickset, which he cut down six times when it was young, and planted the garden. The manner in which he set to work, and the way in which the work was performed, pleased Mr. Fairfax so much, that he told him he should be rent-free. His answer, as Sir Thomas Bernard justly says, deserves to be remembered. ‘Now, sir, you have a pleasure in seeing my cottage and garden neat: and why should not other squires have the same pleasure in seeing the cottages and gardens as nice about them? The poor would then be happy, and would love them, and the place where they lived: but now every nook of land is to be let to the great farmers, and nothing left for the poor but to go to the parish.’

‘Though my visit,’ says Sir Thomas, ‘was unexpected, and he at the latter end of his Saturday’s work, his clothes were neat and sufficiently clean. His countenance was healthy and open; he was a little lame in one leg, the consequence of exposure to wet and weather. He said he had always worked hard and well; but he would not deny but that he had loved a mug of good ale when he could get it. When I told him my object in inquiring after him, that it was in order that other poor persons might have cottages and gardens as neat as his, and that he must tell me *all his secret*, how it was to be done, he seemed extremely pleased, and very much affected: He said, “nothing would make poor folks more happy than finding

‘that great folks thought of them: that he wished every poor man had as comfortable a home as his own, . . not but that he believed there might be a few thoughtless fellows who would not do good in it.’’

Britton Abbot was at this time sixty-seven, and had lived happily with his wife for five and forty years. He earned from twelve to eighteen shillings a week by task work, ‘but to be sure,’ he said, *‘I have a grand character in all this country.’* Five of his children were living, and having been well brought up, were thriving in the world. Upon his rood of ground he had fifteen apple trees, one green gage, three winesour plum trees, two apricot trees, currants, gooseberries, and three beehives; he reared also from this garden abundance of common vegetables, and about forty bushels of potatoes annually. When this man was turned adrift upon the world by the enclosure of the common, if he had been without hope, or if the rood of land for which he asked had been denied, he and his six children, and his pregnant wife, might have gone to the workhouse, and become a burthen to the public, instead of setting it an example, and teaching a most important lesson to their superiors. We will transcribe Sir Thomas Bernard’s words, and print them, as he has done, in a manner which may tend to excite the attention they deserve. *‘FIVE UNSIGHTLY, UNPROFITABLE ACRES OF WASTE GROUND WOULD AFFORD HABITATION AND COMFORT TO TWENTY SUCH FAMILIES AS BRITTON ABBOT’S.’* The quarter of an acre which was granted him was *not worth a shilling a year before it came into his hands,*

The Reports of the same meritorious Society supply another of these

⁺ Short and simple annals of the poor,†

which those who are acquainted with the fact will be pleased to see brought once more into public notice, and which those who are not, may peruse with pleasure and perhaps with advantage to themselves and others. Joseph Austin, a brick-layer in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, had often looked with a longing eye upon a bit of ground by the road side, . . . part of what is called the Lord's Waste, by a term which reflects little credit upon manorial rights, or parochial management. Whenever he looked at this spot he used to think what a nice place it would be for a house: and being a house-builder by trade, and something of a castle-builder by nature, he used as soon as he fell asleep at night to dream that he was at work there with his bricks and his trowel. At length he applied to the manor court and got a verbal leave to build there. Two of his neighbours, moved by envy as he says, threatened that if he began his house they would pull it down; upon this he applied a second time to the court, and obtained a legal permission with the assent of all the copyholders, paying for the entry of his name on the court rolls, and sixpence a year quit-rent. And here we must do our country the justice to observe, that if a man of known industry and good character, like Joseph Austin or Britton Abbot, applies for an indulgence of this kind, there is very little probability that the application will be refused. Austin was at this time about *forty-two* years of age; he had a wife and four children, and his whole stock of worldly riches

amounted to fourteen shillings: But men who deserve friends are seldom without them; and a master, with whom he usually worked at harvest, sold him an old cottage for nine guineas, which he was to work out. He had for some time in his leisure hours been preparing *bats*, . . a sort of bricks made of clay and straw, well beaten together, eighteen inches long, twelve wide, and four deep, not burnt, but dried in the sun; with these and the materials of the old cottage he went to work. The *bats* make a better wall than lath and plaster with a coating of clay, less wood is required, and the house is stronger and warmer; but they must be protected from rain as much as possible, and especially toward the bottom. As he had to live and support his family by his daily labour, this building could only be carried on when his regular day's work was done; he has often continued it by moon-light, and heard the clock strike twelve before he withdrew from an occupation in which his heart was engaged, . . this too when he had to rise at four the next morning, walk to Cambridge (nearly four miles distant) to his work, and return in the evening. If his constitution had not been unusually strong, it must have sunk under these extraordinary exertions, . . among the industrious poor a fate more frequent than is generally supposed! But he seems to have possessed an unweariable frame of body, as well as an invincible spirit. When the building was one story high, and the beams were to be laid on, the carpenter discovered that the timber from the old cottage would not serve for so large a place. *This was a severe disappointment; nothing, how-*

ever, discouraged him; he covered it over with a few loads of *haum*, and immediately began a small place in the same manner, at the end, working at this with such perseverance that he got his family in within four months after the foundations were laid. This great object being accomplished, he went on leisurely with the rest as he could save money for what was wanting: after five years he raised the second story, and in ten it was tiled and coated; the inside was not completed when Mr. Plumtree communicated the story to the Society, but there was house-room for himself and his family, and another apartment was let for a guinea a year.

‘In this manner,’ says that gentleman, ‘Joseph Austin, with singular industry and economy, in the course of ten years built himself a house, which he began with only fourteen shillings in his pocket. During that time his wife had four children, and buried as many more. The money which it cost him was about 50*l.* . . the whole of which was saved from the earnings of daily labour. The house and garden occupy about twenty poles of ground; and the garden is as creditable as the house to the industry and good sense of the owner; . . one of the fences was made of sweet briar and roses mixed with woodbine, another of dwarf plum trees, and against the back of the house he had planted a vine, a nectarine, and a peach tree.’

Such are the advantages which a poor man may attain by perseverance and well-directed industry, . . but there must be hope to aid. Hope is the leaven without which the mind becomes

inert, and tends only to corruption. As well might you look for the kindly fruits of the earth without sunshine in its season, as for any good product from the people without hope.

‘ In all the plans which have been produced for the management of the poor, the defect,’ says Sir Thomas Bernard, ‘ seems to be, that they do not propose to operate as *on free and rational agents, and on religious and accountable creatures*, each filling his place best when most earnestly seeking his own happiness ; but as upon *works of art and mere mechanism*, where the *greatest momentum* is to be acquired when the *machinery* is most complicated, and the *principles of action* most involved. We have made repeated experiments on parochial manufactures, on farming the poor, on increasing the poor’s rate, on the patronage of sentimental beggars, and the establishment of incorporated work-houses : . . . Let us now try the influence of *religious motive*, the consequence of *melioration of character*, and the effect of *improvement of condition*. Let us endeavour to operate by individual kindness and encouragement, by the prospect of acquiring property, and by every other incitement to industry and prudence ; and we shall find that when the component parts of the body politic become sound and perfect, the state itself will be healthy and thriving.’

This is true radical reform, . . . this is the reform of which the nation stands in need, . . . and it is that also in which every one according to his station may bear a part. The good man will not be deterred from persevering in good, though his

attempts to benefit others should sometimes end in disappointment, or sometimes be ill-bestowed and unthankfully requited*. A poet more conversant with humble life than any of his brethren, and in knowledge of human nature, its principles and its powers, not inferior to the greatest of his predecessors, says upon this subject—

‘ I’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning,
Alas ! the gratitude of man
Has oftener left me mourning !’

WORDSWORTH.

The experience of most good men would agree with the poet’s ; for though diseases of the mind (and all vices . . without ceasing to be vices . . are such) are unhappily frequent as well as diseases of the body, like them also they are exceptions to the general and healthy state of man.

So far as the further increase of pauperism can be prevented, and the poor-rates diminished, by improving the condition of the present generation of the poor, more may be done by benevolent individuals, and by making parishes sensible of their true interest, than by any parliamentary interference. It augured well of the Society, when,

* ‘ *Les Princes et autres,*’ says Comines, ‘ *se plaignent aucunesfois comme par déconfort, quand ils ont fait bien ou plaisir à quelqu’un, disans que celu leur procede de malheur, et que pour le temps à venir ne seront si legers, ou à pardonner, ou à faire quelque liberalité, ou autre chose de grace, que toutes sont choses appartenantes à leurs offices. A mon avis c’est mal parlé ; et procede de lasche cœur à ceux qui ainsi le font et disent ; car un Prince ou un autre homme qui ne fut jamais trompé, ne scauroit estre qu’une beste, ny avoir connoissance du bien et du mal, ny qu’elle difference il y a. Et davan-tage, les gens ne sont pas tous d’une complexion : par quoy, par la mauvaistié d’un ou de deux, ne se doit laisser à faire plaisir à plusieurs, quand on en a le temps et opportunité.*’—*Liv. ii. c. 3.*

upon first proposing this establishment, Sir Thomas Bernard, the founder, deprecated any attempt at proceeding rapidly and prematurely. In the same spirit of wisdom, after eight years of patient inquiry, he laid it down as a principle that, in every measure respecting the poor, we should avoid sudden and rapid changes. The Turks have a proverb, that hurry comes from the devil, and slow-advancing from God. More than this, he says truly, that not only sudden changes ought to be avoided, but also any unnecessary variation, in form and manner, from long-existent institutions. Far different this from the principle of our political. . . or, more properly speaking, our pseudo-reformers, who, under pretence of restoring the constitution to what it never at any time was, would, by their violent innovations, dislocate the parts, loosen the foundations, and subvert the whole fabric ! Great good may be brought about by means so easy and gradual, as almost to be imperceptible. If such slips of waste land as were given to Joseph Austin and Britton Abbot, and as even now are every where to be seen, were in like manner to be appropriated wherever there were labourers of good character able and desirous to improve them, that moral charm which delights the traveller in Flanders, would then be added to the English landscape ; the very face of the country would in a few years shew that the vital parts had recovered their tone and their healthy action ; the poor-rates in the agricultural parts of England would be prevented from increasing at first, and gradually reduced ; the amount of the additional *produce in fruit and garden vegetables would an-*

pear, if it were calculated, surprisingly great ; and there would be a produce of virtues and human happiness, the worth of which is beyond all calculation. Greatly too would this desirable end be furthered, if the great landed proprietors, instead of throwing their estates into the largest farms that can be managed by an individual, were in some degree to reverse their system, and, ascertaining what are the smallest that can be cultivated with proper advantage, were to afford many families the means of subsisting with comfort and respectability, instead of enabling one to adventure for wealth by speculating in agriculture upon a large scale. Too long has that foul philosophy prevailed which considers men either as mere machines, who fulfil all the purposes of their existence if they furnish recruits for fleets and armies, and raise money sufficient for the exigencies of the state ; or as mere animals, whose animal wants are all that are to be taken into the account of statistic economy. Hence the absurd assertion, that the greatest benefactor of his species was the man who made two blades of grass grow where only one had grown before ; and hence the more absurd approbation with which the hyperbole has been received as a maxim of political wisdom ! *Quicquid amat valdè amat* may truly be said of the Englishman ; a good deal of this disposition has been shewn in the ardour with which agriculture has been taken up as a fashion, and as one of the many means for acquiring notoriety. The benefit which has resulted from it may remain when the folly shall have evaporated, and the evil passed away ; but it were well if our gentle and noble

agriculturists would more generally take a pride in increasing the comforts of the peasantry, and meliorating their moral and intellectual state. . . Great and successful efforts have been made not only in improving the fleece of the sheep, but in increasing the tallow and spoiling the mutton; in fitting cattle to the standard of perfection at the shambles; in delighting amateur graziers with the beauty of Farnese Tups, Bulls-Belvedere, and Cows de' Medici; and astonishing amateur butchers by the weight and dimensions of Lambert Oxen. The skill of the engraver has been called in to perpetuate the triumphs of art over nature, in inducing a disease of obesity which makes the animal at once hideous, helpless, and miserable; and the fortunate feeders have been rewarded with cups and vases which are to be handed down as heirlooms in their families, and excite the young gentry and nobility of England to emulate their fathers in the same ennobling pursuits! . . . A little less of this folly in future, . . . and a little more attention towards the real and permanent interests of our fellow-creatures.

What has hitherto been said relates almost exclusively to the agricultural poor; what other means of bettering their condition have been devised, are equally applicable to those of all descriptions, . . . miners, manufacturers, and those who dwell in large cities, who are hardly less numerous at this time than those engaged in rural occupations, but are in some respects more wretched, and in general more corrupt. When, in pursuance of Mr. Rose's Bill, authentic information was, for the first time in any country, laid before the public of

the number of paupers, and the amount of the poor-rates, it appeared that more than 700,000 persons were enrolled in benefit societies. The advantage of such societies might fairly be inferred from their antiquity; they are known to have existed in some of the ancient Greek republics; traces of them are found among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors; and, what is more remarkable, institutions of a similar purport have been discovered in some of the South Sea Islands, among a people still barbarous enough to delight in devouring the flesh of their enemies. There is much good in these societies; and the protection which government has given them has been found of considerable use; that protection also originated in Mr. Rose, whose views have been steadily and usefully directed toward the real benefit of the great body of the people, and whose name therefore will be deservedly respected when some of those who are now on all occasions ready to assail him will be remembered far less honourably. .if indeed they be remembered at all. The protection would have been more efficacious if, according to his intention, a power of effectual interposition in the affairs of the societies had been given to the magistrates; but this intention was very properly given up, when it was ascertained that the members were jealous of such interference. In the neighbourhood of London, a majority of one of these societies, all young men, passed a vote for dissolving the society and dividing the stock; thus defrauding the old members of that provision *for age and infirmity* for which they had so long *contributed*: the young villains then formed a

new society among themselves, and left the old men to the parish. No magistrate would have permitted an act of such impudent iniquity as this.

The number of persons enrolled in these associations would decidedly prove that there is by no means a general want of forethought among the lower classes. There is nothing attractive in their object; . . the weekly or monthly payment is not a deposit made by hopeful industry for future comfort and enjoyment, but a provision against sickness, the inevitable infirmities of old age, and the expenses attendant upon death. It is not a little honourable to the national character, that among the uninstructed ranks, who stand in need of such a provision, so large a proportion should be found who are mindful of the decline of life, and prepare this melancholy resource for themselves and their widows; and hence it may reasonably be supposed that the Saving Banks will be generally established wherever these more cheerful, and infinitely more important institutions shall become generally known. It would scarcely be too much to affirm, that a more beneficial institution has never been devised since the foundations of civilized society were laid; and scarcely too much to hope that it may operate as a sinking-fund toward the extinction of the poor-rates, . . as a moral vaccination against the spreading infection of pauperism and misery. This also is a means for bettering the condition of the poor, for which no legislative interference is required; but were the legislature to facilitate it by establishing *County Banks*, the people might thus be delivered from

the greatest political evil to which they are subject. The frequent failures of provincial banks, and the misery which they occasion, deserve the serious attention of government; no political circumstances ever, in this island, produced such extensive distress and ruin. The tenant who has laid by his rent, the shopkeeper who has collected money for his payments, find, like the man in the Arabian Tales, that what they received as money, is at once become worthless; they could insure against fire, they could guard against thieves, but there are no means of providing against this danger; they incur it with their eyes open.. knowingly but inevitably; for in the greater part of England, country notes are exclusively in common circulation. The evil of the old Birmingham halfpence, or the present generation of Irish shillings, whose reign is now to be at an end, were mere trifles compared to this: it is a public and notorious evil, which affects all the middle classes of the community, and which it is both the interest and the duty of government to remove.

Thanks to the gradual improvements which have been made, there are but few political evils left for government to amend in this fortunate country. The grievances to which the labouring poor were subject, in being removed from places where they were not parishioners, lest they should become chargeable, have been taken away; and for this benefit also they are indebted to Mr. Rose. Further good might be effected, if the practice of passing paupers to their parish were discontinued, *and relief administered to them upon the spot where they needed it*, the balances being annually

settled between the respective parishes or counties ; much expense and much litigation might thus be avoided, and there would be no room for those occasional instances of brutality which it is better to prevent than to punish. There is more to be done in delivering the people from evil, by removing temptation. Magistrates should be less ready to grant licenses for public-houses, and more prompt in taking them away in all cases where irregular hours are kept, and disorderly meetings permitted or encouraged. Bull-baiting should be prohibited. Mr. Windham, who so often became paradoxical for the pleasure which he felt in exercising his intellectual subtlety, never went so far astray in following the Will o' the Wisp of his own imagination, as when he defended this brutal practice. There is no necessary connection between courage and cruelty. .there seems to be a natural one between cruelty and cowardice ; for though brave men may sometimes be cruel, cowards are generally so ; and among savages, and in the excesses which have been committed by infuriated mobs, the weaker sex have always been more cruel than the men. Mr. Windham's argument was false in all its bearings, and so he would have discovered if he had asked his heart the question ; there never breathed a more intrepid man, nor one with quicker feelings of generous humanity. .but his heart was not consulted upon this occasion. Cock-fighting is much more frequent, and much more pernicious, for it connects gambling with cruelty : and here it may be observed, that in all measures of preventive reform, which the legislature may enact, or the magistrate enforce, they

will be acting in unison with the wishes of the well-disposed men among the class for whose benefit these measures are intended ; and of all the women : . . wives and mothers and sisters and daughters will bless them for such interference.

Disgraceful as these practices are to the nation, and detrimental as they are in their consequences, they are trifling, both in extent and in evil, to the consequences of the Game Laws. Mr. Weyland's letter upon this subject cannot fail of convincing every considerate reader that an immediate alteration in these laws is, of all legislative measures, the most necessary for preventing crimes. ' The extent and progress of the evil,' says this active and most meritorious magistrate, ' cannot be conceived by those who are not conversant with the lower ranks in the country villages. From extensive observation and inquiry, I believe in my conscience that three-fourths of the crimes which bring so many poor men to the gallows, have their origin in the habits necessarily introduced by the almost irresistible temptations held out in consequence of the prohibitions of the Game Laws, and a nightly breach of their enactments.'

He declares, of his own knowledge, that in every village with which he is acquainted, the profligate characters may trace the first corruption of their habits to this cause ; and he says, the wonder is not that so many are corrupted, but that so many escape the temptation. This subject is so important, that Mr. Weyland's statement cannot be too generally circulated, nor his *object too strongly recommended.* The Game

Laws were intended to preserve the pleasures of sporting for the landed proprietors, and to secure game for the tables of the higher orders, as an object of luxury and distinction; the lower class attach no value to game as a delicacy; their sense of taste has never been cultivated, and to them it is only worth its weight as meat: to them, therefore, there was no hardship in the privation, and certainly no injustice in reserving animals for the profit of those persons at whose cost they had been fed. When those laws were enacted, the gentry of England were all landholders; since that time the monied interest has risen to an equal rank; fashion and custom have made game one of the requisite luxuries of an opulent table, and three-fourths of the persons who consume it, and from their station in life are expected to consume it, can procure it in no other way than by purchasing from those persons who employ poachers, or corrupt the gamekeepers. Is it to be expected that a large and affluent part of the community, who know that, according to the usages of the country in which they live, game ought to appear at their tables, will abstain from it in deference to laws which time has made unjust by making them inapplicable to the existing circumstances of society, and which the landholders, in whose favour they were framed, and in condescension to whose prejudices they have too long been retained, are so far from respecting themselves, that the very persons, who would most severely punish poaching upon their own estates, make no scruple of encouraging it elsewhere, by ordering game at an inn whenever they are tra-

velling? Since the establishment of the mail-coach, and the increased rapidity of travelling and number of public conveyances, poaching has increased fifty fold; game is conveyed from the remotest parts of England to the London market, and the commissariat department of the trade is regular and perfect. It thus possesses greater facilities than smuggling; and while the one offence prevails along the whole coast of the island, the other prevails in every part of it. It would be superfluous to dwell upon the consequences: the instances of homicide and murder to which it leads are now become so frequent, that the magnitude of the evil is universally perceived and acknowledged. ‘If,’ says Mr. Weyland, ‘the object of a good law is to prevent the commission of an offence, it is difficult to speak in terms of measured indignation concerning statutes which at one and the same time both promote and punish the same crime. To be both *unjust* and *ineffectual* is the deepest reproach with which any law can be stained; but it is by no means the foulest to which the present game laws are obnoxious; . . . they are not only unjust, as *they tempt to the commission of the offence which they punish*; not only ineffectual, as *they have no tendency to prevent the commission of the offence*; not only absurd, as tending to *raise the price of game* by the additions made to its cost on account of risk and penalties, . . . but they are, above all, grossly wicked, as the chief positive consequence is *the general destruction of the morals of the rural population*.’ The cause of this evil exists obviously in the demand for

game among such of the opulent classes as can only procure it by purchase. The remedy which Mr. Weyland proposes, is to legalize the sale of game in open market, and to permit all occupiers of land of above thirty or forty acres in extent, to kill game, for sale or otherwise, on their own land, unless they are specially prohibited by agreement with their landlords; such persons paying one guinea for a license, and the poulterer and inn-keeper taking out in like manner an annual license; and lastly, that qualified persons should not sport upon preserved or inclosed ground (after notice to abstain) under a penalty of five pounds. Here would be an increase of revenue, if that object were worthy of consideration, when the welfare of the lower classes is so deeply implicated. The game would be increased, as it would every where be the farmer's interest to preserve it, whereas at present it is his interest to connive at, or encourage its destruction. It is not many years since the grand jury, in one of the northern counties, received, when they were dining together, a basket containing two thousand partridges' eggs, carefully packed. This further and greater good would arise, that whe then wild animals upon the land were made the property of the farmer by whom they are fed, they would be considered as such in general opinion, and the equity of the law be recognized by that sense of justice which positive law can never offend without provoking offences.

No single act of the legislature would so certainly decrease the number of crimes, as an alteration of the game laws. There are other evils *which the legislature might redress.* The night-

work in the cotton-mills, one of the most inhuman practices that ever calculating avarice devised, has been prohibited^{*}; but it is to be hoped that government will interfere further, and limit the day-labour exacted from the poor children whom their parents or their parishes have sold to this miserable employment.

From the white slaves to the British negroes is an easy transition. It was a clumsy and cruel contrivance of the Romans, to use hedge-hogs for clothes-brushes, and prepare them for it by starving them to death: our method of sweeping chimneys is not more ingenious, and little less inhuman. The practice however is not, as has been asserted, peculiar to England, nor is it of so modern an origin as has been supposed. The first chimney-sweepers in Germany came from Savoy, Piedmont, and the neighbouring territories, the only countries where chimney-sweeping, for a long time, was followed as a trade; and from hence, Beckmann conjectures, that chimneys were invented in Italy. M. Jaubert had drawn the less reasonable inference, that the Savoyards had learnt the art of climbing from the marmots, . . as if the art of climbing were not learnt by boys, wherever there are trees or crags to climb! The greater part of the chimney-sweepers in Paris, according to Beckmann, are still Savoyards. The earliest mention that we have found of this trade in England, is in Beaumont and Fletcher; and the broken English which they

* This act was not passed without considerable opposition; and an attempt was made to procure its repeal, upon the plea, that unless the owners of cotton-mills could work their apprentices night and day, it would amount to a surrender of all their profits!

have put into the mouth of *Monsieur Black*, as they call him, indicates rather a Savoyard than a Frenchman*; but proves that the trade was imported into this country, and originally exercised by foreigners. If, however, we have not the sin of having invented it, it may be feared that we have carried it to a more brutal extent than any other nation; . . for, half a century ago, girls† were employed in this disgusting and cruel occupation. This certainly would not be tolerated now by popular feeling; nor ought the trade itself to be tolerated longer. Children cannot be compelled to learn it, frightful and perilous as it is, without cruelty: it induces a peculiar and fatal disorder, so common, as to be called the chimney-sweeper's disease; and the boys who escape the disease, and are neither killed by filth nor hard usage, outgrow the employment when they shoot into manhood, and find themselves adrift upon the world, without any means of getting a livelihood; for, notwithstanding the consumption of life, the trade does not afford a maintenance for one in seven of those who are apprenticed to it. 'The consequence,' says Sir Thomas Bernard, 'is, that the greater part of these boys are driven to a profligate and vicious course of life by the want of education and protection: that of about two hundred master chimney-sweepers in London, there are not above twenty who can make a decent livelihood by it; and that in most in-

* 'Ma litla, litla frera, and é, chante frere chante...Monsieur é 'have dis for votra barba, ple ta vou Monsieur.'...Broken French was never written thus.

† Fawkes has an epithalamium upon the marriage of a cobbler and a female chimney-sweeper.

‘stances the master is only a lodger, having one room for himself, his wife, and children, and another (generally a cellar without a fire-place) for his soot and his apprentices, without any means of providing for their comfort, health, or cleanliness, and without any other bed for them than the soot-bags which they have been using in the course of their day’s work.’ A recent case of atrocious barbarity, in which a child was killed in such a manner that the law could not pronounce it murder, though the act was committed, and the guilt in its worst degree incurred, has called the public attention strongly to this subject. It is some years since the Adelphi Society granted a premium for the invention of a machine which supersedes the necessity of employing human creatures in this shocking manner. An act of parliament ought to be passed for abolishing the present trade; and public benevolence would, beyond all doubt, find suitable provision for the little slaves who would thus be emancipated.

A man of wit, seeing the chimney-sweepers in their May-day trappings, observed that he had often heard of the ‘majesty of the people,’ and these were doubtless some of the young princes: But with what feelings will a good man contemplate these wretched beings in their every-day state, when he thinks of the majesty of human nature, the capacities with which it is endowed, and the immortality for which it is created? When he reflects upon the condition of these most forlorn and pitiable of his species, and upon the far greater numbers who are working at unwholesome occupations, *in hot and offensive rooms, debarred from all the*

have put into the mouth of *Monsieur Black*, as they call him, indicates rather a Savoyard than a Frenchman*; but proves that the trade was imported into this country, and originally exercised by foreigners. If, however, we have not the sin of having invented it, it may be feared that we have carried it to a more brutal extent than any other nation;..for, half a century ago, girls† were employed in this disgusting and cruel occupation. This certainly would not be tolerated now by popular feeling; nor ought the trade itself to be tolerated longer. Children cannot be compelled to learn it, frightful and perilous as it is, without cruelty: it induces a peculiar and fatal disorder, so common, as to be called the chimney-sweeper's disease; and the boys who escape the disease, and are neither killed by filth nor hard usage, outgrow the employment when they shoot into manhood, and find themselves adrift upon the world, without any means of getting a livelihood; for, notwithstanding the consumption of life, the trade does not afford a maintenance for one in seven of those who are apprenticed to it. 'The consequence,' says Sir Thomas Bernard, 'is, that the greater part of these boys are driven to a profligate and vicious course of life by the want of education and protection: that of about two hundred master chimney-sweepers in London, there are not above twenty who can make a decent livelihood by it; and that in most in-

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thor, as one who recommended that the poor should be kept in ignorance. These calumnies were then exposed; and it was proved by official documents, the authenticity of which could not be called in question, that the system originated at Madras, where the principle of mutual instruction, having been accidentally resorted to in practice, was first perceived as a principle, and as such applied, and carried into full effect. Since the publication of that essay, time, by which all controversies are finally decided, has gone far toward deciding this; Joseph Lancaster has disappeared from the Lancasterian schools which his partisans founded; and as they begin to be ashamed of the name, as well as of the man, the name is disappearing also. Meantime the Madras system has been exhibited under the auspices of the National Society; and all who have visited the Central School are witnesses that the process of education is carried on to the greatest possible advantage of the pupils, and with the greatest possible ease, expedition, and economy. When the last Annual Report of the Society was published, there were about 700 schools conducted under their auspices, and the number of children comprised in these schools exceeded 100,000. Promising, however, as this is, and great as is the good which has been effected, it is little in comparison with what might be done. It rests upon no stable foundation. The more zealous and munificent benefactors may leave none to supply their loss, when they drop off in the course of nature; and it must not be expected that individual liberality will always keep pace with the

demands which are made upon it. But a business of such momentous interest should not depend upon casual means alone ; nor ought government to rely upon private benevolence for the performance of one of the most imperative and important of all public duties.

The wicked opinion, that it is good policy for a government to keep the people in ignorance, has been exposed by Sir William Davenant, in arguments which the circumstances of his own age suggested ; and which are but too applicable at present :—‘ A maxim,’ he says it is, ‘ sounding like
‘ the little subtlety of one that is a statesman only by
‘ birth or beard, and merits not his place by much
‘ thinking. For ignorance is rude, censorious,
‘ jealous, obstinate, and proud ; these being ex-
‘ actly the ingredients of which disobedience is
‘ made : and obedience proceeds from ample con-
‘ sideration, of which knowledge consists ; and
‘ knowledge will soon put into one scale the
‘ weight of oppression, and into the other the
‘ heavy burden which disobedience lays on us in
‘ the effects of civil war ; and then even tyranny
‘ will seem much lighter, when the hand of su-
‘ preme power binds up our load, and lays it art-
‘ fully on us, than disobedience (the parent of
‘ confusion), when we all load one another, in
‘ which every one increases his fellow’s burden
‘ to lessen his own.’ Such was the judgement
of a wise man in evil times, when the unhappy
temper of the age seemed to admit no medium
between absolute power and anarchy : it was his
opinion, that the wisest policy, even for a despotic
government, was to instruct the people ; . . . how

much more, then, must it be the interest of a government wisely constructed, justly administered, and perfectly free, like ours, especially when its internal enemies are continually labouring to bring it into disrepute by imposing the shallowest sophistry, the grossest misrepresentations, and the most impudent falsehoods, upon the ignorance of the vulgar!

A recent parliamentary inquiry has shewn that there are from 120 to 130,000 children in the metropolis without the means of education; between three and four thousand of whom are let out by their parents to beggars, or employed in pilfering, . . . and thus trained up for profligacy, the prison, and the gallows! A like proportion would be found in all large cities, and throughout the manufacturing districts a far greater. It is not necessary to dwell upon the impolicy and evil consequences of suffering so large a part of the community to grow up in ignorance, . . . it is not necessary to point out the political danger and the moral guilt: these points will not now be disputed; all parties are agreed upon the duty and necessity of educating the people. The point which is disputed is, whether, upon any great and general plan of national education, the children should or should not be instructed in the principles of the established church. But if governments are secure in proportion as the great body of the subjects are attached to the institutions of their country, it necessarily follows that national education ought to be conducted in conformity *to those institutions*. No proposition in geometry *is more certain than this*; no inference is more

inevitable. Upon this principle our public schools and colleges have all been founded, . . institutions which are unrivalled in the rest of the world. The very sects in condescension to which we are required to exclude the doctrines of the church from public education, would be the first to acknowledge the unreasonableness of the request, if they were not aware of its consequences, as tending to sap and subvert the establishment which they detest. Ask the Quakers or the Romanists so to regulate their seminaries, and accommodate the mode of instruction, that the children of churchmen may not be excluded, . . and they will laugh you, and deservedly laugh you, to scorn ! The very Romanist will silence you by an appeal to the Bible. . . " Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

The cost of national education is rendered so trifling, by Dr. Bell's intellectual steam-engine, that the expense would present no obstacle ; but it is only by the legislature that this good can be rendered permanent, and extended to the whole nation. Fain would we see a system of parochial schools connected with the church establishment, and fencing it like a line of outworks, and the parish clerks raised into respectability by being made the parish schoolmasters, when a race of men should have been fitted for the office. Among the queries which the excellent Bishop Berkley proposed to the consideration of the public, are the following : ' Whether it be not of great advantage to the church of Rome that she hath clergy *'suited to all ranks of men, in gradual subordi-*

‘ nation from cardinals down to mendicants?
‘ Whether her numerous poor clergy are not very
‘ useful in missions, and of much influence with
‘ the people? Whether, in defect of able mis-
‘ sionaries, persons conversant in low life, and
‘ speaking the Irish tongue (he is here referring
‘ particularly to Ireland), if well instructed in the
‘ first principles of religion, and in the Popish
‘ controversy, though for the rest on a level with
‘ the parish clerks, or the schoolmasters of charity-
‘ schools, may not be fit to mix with and bring
‘ over our poor illiterate natives to the established
‘ church? And whether, in these views, it may
‘ not be right to breed up some of the better sort
‘ of children in the charity-schools, and qualify
‘ them for missionaries, catechists, and readers?’
Berkley published his *Querist* about eighty years
ago: these hints, which he then threw out for the
benefit of Ireland, might have excited some useful
reflections in England also; and if the heads of
the English church at that time had been actuated
by a spirit like that of this excellent prelate, the zeal
of Wesley and Whitfield, instead of being inflamed
and exasperated by ill-judged resistance, might
not impossibly have been conciliated, regulated,
and so wisely directed, that those extraordinary
men might have been to the establishment what
Dominic and Loyola were to the Romish church,
instead of becoming the founders of a schism.
No person can contemplate the organization and
the rapid increase of the Methodists, without
perceiving the imminent danger with which the
national church is threatened: but a full sense of
that danger, and a full perception of the evils

which they have done, and the heavier evil to be apprehended from their further success, must not prevent us from acknowledging that they have done good also, and sown the seeds of the Gospel in many places which would otherwise still have remained waste ground. At the time of the Reformation, the Romish church was in its worst state, its scandalous abuses having in fact provoked that tremendous, but needful and salutary revolution. A dissolute clergy, and a series of atheistical popes, some of whom were the most profligate of the human race, seemed to delight in outraging decency, and insulting the people upon whose credulity they preyed. The doctrines and discipline of that corrupt church remain unaltered; . . the same idolatry exists . . the same polytheism, the same assumption of infallibility, the same consistent intolerance; while the practice of auricular confession, and the celibacy of the clergy, produce the same injurious consequences to the purity of private morals and the well-being of society. But the Romish church, even in Italy, and in Rome itself, has learnt decency of manners from the Reformation; and the conduct of its higher clergy, which was formerly so shameless, has become decorous in most cases, and exemplary in many. Had it been thus in the sixteenth century, we should perhaps have retained some of its institutions, which, with due modifications, might be rendered as useful as they were then pernicious. One of its chief advantages is, that no men, who can possibly serve it in any station, are precluded from its service: it *has had, therefore, always members enough, and*

among them subjects suited to every sphere and every kind of duty, . . . from the cardinal who directed with absolute control the councils of the French or Spanish monarchy, in the days of their greatest power, to the lay brother, who performed with unaffected humility the menial offices of a hospital. The Methodists also have this advantage ; for they are wise in their generation. Archbishop Wake is known to have taken some steps toward effecting a union with the church of Rome ; and the same benevolent hope has been expressed by the most learned and most liberal of the English Catholics. But this never can be effected ; for there can be no compromise between truth and falsehood. With the Methodists a union is possible ; yet even here the difficulties are so many, . . . such a concession of dignity is required from the one side, and of power from the other, with perhaps some sacrifice of prejudice from both, that it might almost appear absurd to recommend a measure which is so devoutly to be wished.

There is always, and there ever will be, a quantity of religious enthusiasm in every civilized community, which becomes useful or injurious, as it is well or erroneously directed. To prevent it is impossible . . . even if its prevention were desirable ; . . . it arises out of the condition of human nature, and is one of the manifestations of our immortality. Where it occurs in youth and opening manhood, it is most commonly in great measure factitious, and its durability may be doubted. The vanity of human wishes, and the instability of human happiness, trite as the topics are, must *be experienced* before they influence our conduct.

It is not in the heyday of health and enjoyment . . it is not in the morning sunshine of his vernal day . . that man can be expected feelingly to remember his latter end, and to fix his heart upon eternity. In the order of nature, what Hartley calls theopathy, is not, and ought not, to be looked for, as the predominant feeling of youth; the religious enthusiasm of youth is likely to abate; or sometimes the appearance is retained when the reality has evaporated, and zeal as it cools settles into hypocrisy. But in after-life many causes operate to wean us from the world: grief softens the heart, sickness searches it; the blossoms of hope are shed; death cuts down the flower of our affections; the disappointed man turns his thoughts toward a state of existence where his wiser desires may be fixed with the certainty of faith; the successful man feels that the objects which he has ardently pursued fail to satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit; the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he may save his soul alive. Among men who, to borrow a word from the Spaniards, are thus undeceived*, the Catholic church has, in all times, found its most efficient and useful ministers, from the days of St. Augustine to La Harpe. They require to be actively employed, . . *in labore quies*, . . the restless spirit finds food and gratification in action, and could not be supported without it. But the English church has no room for them in her ranks, and provides no employment for them; they are therefore gathered into the Methodist fold.

* *Desengañados*.

During the first age of Methodism, Bishop Lavington published a curious parallel between the enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists, . . the former were not then so well understood as they are at present, and the latter a great deal better. At that time the sect was in its first effervescence, and committed many extravagancies and follies, which in the natural process of fermentation have since worked off. If their journals and experiences then afforded abundant resemblances to the legends of the Romish church, a parallel would now hold equally good with many of their institutions and practices, . . in their confessions, their system of itinerancy, and the knowledge of human nature which they have shewn in raising women to a degree of importance in their church, which has in no slight degree contributed to its rapid progress. Possibly it may not be long (after the example of the Romish church, . . in this instance truly exemplary) before they form societies like the Beguines of Flanders, and the *Sœurs de la Charité* of France, whom the French found it necessary to re-establish* for

* What Portalis said upon this subject in his report upon the Concordat well deserves attention. *‘Qu’avons nous fait, quand, après la dévastation générale, nous avons voulu rétablir nos hospices? Nous avons rappelé ces vierges Chrétiennes connues sous le nom de Sœurs de la Charité, qui se sont si généreusement consacrées au service de l’humanité malheureuse, infirme et souffrante. Ce n’est ni l’amour propre ni la gloire qui peuvent encourager des vertus et des actions trop dégoûtantes, et trop pénibles pour pouvoir être payés par des applaudissemens humains. Il faut élever ses regards au-dessus des hommes; et l’on ne peut trouver des motifs d’encouragement et de zèle que dans cette piété qui anime la bienfaisance, qui est étrangère aux vanités du monde, et qui fait goûter dans la carrière du bien public des consolations que la raison seule ne pourrait nous donner. On a fait,*

the good of humanity, when first they began to restore the forms of religion. The commissioners, whom Louis XVI. sent to inspect the English hospitals, said that the only thing wanting there was religious charity. It is, indeed, to be wished that a religious character could be given to many of our institutions, . . . they would then become more respected and more useful. The overseer, for instance, has a Christian duty to perform as well as a civil office, and were it but thus considered in public estimation, the duty would be the better discharged. Do what we can for ameliorating society, there must still be hospitals for the sick, asylums for the destitute, and prisons for the criminal; but the prison might be made a place of moral discipline, the poor-house a place of religious retreat; and if Christian consolation found its way into the hospital, the wounded spirit might be healed when the bodily disease was irremediable.

The Reports of the Society for benefitting the Poor contains an account of two religious societies formed among the aged poor at the suggestion of the excellent Bishop of Durham. The members meet together on Sunday evening for religious improvement; they engage to promote, as far as is in their power by influence and example, the observance of the Sabbath, and to do every thing that in them lies for promoting good will,

' d'autre part, la triste expérience, que des mercénaires sans motif intérieur qui puisse les attacher constamment à leur devoir, ne sauroient remplacer des personnes animées par l'esprit de la religion, c'est à dire, par un principe qui est supérieur aux sentimens de la nature, et qui pouvant seul motiver tous les sacrifices, est seul capable de nous faire braver tous les dégoûts et tous les dangers.'

good neighbourhood, and Christianity one amongst another ; and they allot a tenth part of the little which they can lay by to the relief of their more necessitous neighbours. A penny per week is paid by each member, and the contributions of honorary members created a fund which enabled their weekly deposit to be returned at the end of the year ; twofold to all above sixty years of age ; threefold to those who had reached the full age of man, and fourfold to those of fourscore. If that due instruction be given in childhood, which it is the interest and the duty of a Christian government to provide for all its subjects, none will then perish through ignorance, . . there will be a rule of conduct for every one in life, and a consolation in age and calamity, except they wilfully go wrong. What it is to possess that consolation, and what it is to be without it, may be better shewn by example, than by any reasoning. A woman at Dundee, in humble life, was left a widow in her youth, with one child ; she supported herself and the boy, and paid a trifle for his education : her own had been entirely neglected. When he was twelve years old, the mother was afflicted with a paralytic stroke, which confined her to her bed a hopeless cripple. The boy then procured work at an Osnaburgh manufactory ; every morning he cleaned the room, prepared breakfast, and made her comfortable for the day before he went to his loom ; a neighbour occasionally called in to assist her during his absence. The child taught her to read, she procured a Bible, and the comfort which *she found* there was such, that when she had thus *been bed-ridden* for five years she called herself

one of the happiest of mortals. Now for the contrast: A woman, in humble life also, being seduced in her youth, and finding herself pregnant, retired under the strong sense of shame to a lonely cottage, and there brought forth a daughter who proved an idiot, and for that reason, being always helpless as an infant, was always an object of unabated tenderness and love. More than fifty years they lived together, the mother excluding as much as possible all commerce with the world, and supporting herself and her child by her own labour. In 1810 the idiot died, and the survivor was seen, a few years afterwards, by one whom humanity, not less than curiosity, induced to visit her. .her grief being spoken of as extraordinary both for its strength and duration. The village near which she lived is situated in one of the most exposed, wild, unfrequented, and barren spots in Somersetshire, and the hovel was one of the most miserable hiding-places in which wretchedness had ever laid itself down to die. Not a footstep or patten-mark was near the door, scarcely any vestige of a path; the cracked mud wall was not more than four feet in height, and the roof had no other covering than the damp green moss under which the thatch had rotted. The moor sheep (says the friend from whose letter we are now writing) lying under the black rocks, which every where appeared among the surrounding heath and peat, seemed better housed and sheltered than the inmate of this nook of misery. The inside was, if possible, worse, yet it seemed as if some care had formerly been taken to make it comfortable; for the bedstead on which the

woman sate, and whatever furniture damp and neglect had not destroyed, appeared once to have been decent; there were mildewed prints upon the walls, which in better days had been neatly nailed up with red tape, and in what had once been a window there were some flower-pots, but the plants were dead; the window was stopt up with weeds, and covered with cobwebs, on which the damp had collected in large drops. She was sitting erect on the bed with her arms folded, and a countenance that exhibited the character of sullenness rather than of grief. Her features were strong but regular, such as in youth had probably been beautiful in no ordinary degree, and even now had much womanly expression in them when she spoke. All her neighbours had long dreaded and abused her for being a witch; and the overseers, with whom she was compelled to have intercourse, had brought no unusual degree of feeling or charity to the execution of their office: no wonder then that a stranger should be doubtfully received. The visitor began the conversation by begging shelter, and presently made some observations on the state of the hovel. She said she had done with comfort, and did not wish to be better off. He asked if her neighbours were kind to her; her answer was that she never *would* have neighbours at any time, much less now; she used to be happy without them, and they could not make her happy now. He inquired if she could get sufficient food; yes, she said, but she ate little and cared not what it was; *her clothing* was supplied by the parish. Did she *never go out*? But seldom, she made answer,

because she did not chuse to be asked questions. The stranger then said that, although she might dislike any human company, she might, perhaps, find some amusement in keeping chickens ; and he offered to set her up with some, and with food to keep them. She replied, that she never more would take care of any living thing ; it was a kind offer, but she had her reasons for refusing it. The determined tone of her voice and her manner compelled him to drop the conversation, and he had too much humanity to touch on the immediate cause of her grief. Her notions of religion were too indistinct to afford her any relief, . . they had never been cultivated, . . and the fruit therefore was not to be found when it was wanting. Nor was there any of that pride which enables many to bear up against affliction ; it was vehement grief acting upon a strong mind and strong frame, unmixed, unsophisticated, unalleviated, . . and, for want of the most precious of all the Almighty's gifts to man, unalleviable. She was at that time seventy-six, and in such bodily strength and health, that she seemed likely long to continue in this awful state. This case is the more impressive, because the subject possessed no ordinary strength of heart, and no ordinary capacity of virtue, else shame would not have wrought on her so strongly in her youth, nor her affections have retained such intensity in age. The mere absence of religion caused this excess of misery. More frightful instances might be related where this want of religion is combined with moral depravity : One of those wretched women who *infest the streets of London* was carried to a hos-

pital, some few months ago, dying under the effects of poison which she had accidentally taken ; some of the last words she uttered were, that this was a blasted world, and she cared not how soon she were out of it!

There will be lost members under any system of society: but if any be lost for want of competent instruction, the fault is in the society more than in the individual, . . and to whom shall the guilt be imputed? When we have stated upon the authority of parliament that there are above 130,000 children in London, who are at this time without the means of education, and that there are from three to four thousand who are let out to beggars, and trained up in dishonesty; . . even this represents only a part of the evil; . . if the children are without education, the parents are without religion; . . in the metropolis of this enlightened nation the church to which they should belong has provided for them no places of worship; and ‘two-thirds of the lower order ‘of people in London,’ Sir Thomas Bernard says, ‘live as utterly ignorant of the doctrines ‘and duties of Christianity, and are as errant ‘and unconverted pagans, as if they had existed ‘in the wildest part of Africa.’ The case is the same in Manchester, Leeds, Bristol, Sheffield, and in all our large towns; the greatest part of the manufacturing populace, of the miners and colliers, are in the same condition, and if they are not universally so, it is more owing to the zeal of the Methodists than to any other cause.

The chancellor of the exchequer has now intimated that another session will not pass over with-

out means being taken for supplying, in some degree, the scandalous want of churches in the metropolis. But it is not in London only that the population has outgrown the establishment. It appears by Mr. Rickman's Tables that the population of England and Wales has nearly doubled in the last hundred years; and the ten years which intervened between the enumeration of 1801 and 1811, shew an increase of 1,377,000, being about 13 per cent. Since the Reformation it has never been complained that the clergy were too numerous for the duty which they had to perform; their numbers, however, have not increased, while the population has thus doubled upon them; the best mode of rendering what they do more effective, and of enabling them to do more, is by preparing the rising generation, . . by building up an outer and subsidiary establishment of parochial schools.

The age for enacting Utopias is gone by; but God forbid that we should cease to look on in hope and in faith to the gradual and possible amelioration of society! . . God forbid that we should cease to pray for it, and to labour for it as we may! We have lived to see the abolition of the Slave Trade, . . we have lived to see the discovery of Vaccination, events by which one of the greatest moral, and one of the greatest physical evils in the world will ultimately be rooted out. The condition of one great and important class of the community (the military and naval class) has been most materially improved: a wiser and humaner discipline is gradually obtaining in both services; the principle has been intro-

duced of increase of pay in proportion to length of service, and the man who has served his country one-and-twenty years is entitled to his discharge, and to a pension of a shilling a day for life. He who enters the service young may thus retire from it at an age when he has years of enjoyment to look on to in the course of nature. A proportionate pension is allotted to those who are discharged after fourteen years, and sickness or infirmity entitles a man to a support after seven. Honorary distinctions have been extended to privates as well as officers. Regimental schools have been established, and munificent institutions founded, for the orphans of the defenders of their country. When these benefits shall be generally understood, there will be no difficulty in recruiting the army and navy, desertions will become less frequent, and the necessity of pressing will in time be superseded. Nor will the condition of the peasantry, and the manufacturing populace, be less essentially improved when those measures, which the practical philanthropists have recommended, shall be generally introduced. Let there be a system of parochial schools, connected with the church establishment, where every child may receive the rudiments of necessary knowledge, and be well instructed in his moral and religious duties. Let the temptations to guilt be lessened by a prohibition of those brutal sports which harden the heart, and by an alteration of the Game Laws, which are absurd, pernicious, and abominable. Let us multiply farms, instead of *throwing* many into one. Let the labourer, *wherever it is possible*, have his grass plot and

his garden. Let the inducements of industry be further strengthened by the universal institution of Saving Banks, giving thus to every one the fair prospect and easy means of providing in youth for the increased expenses of manhood. Were these measures adopted, the poor-rates would diminish, and in no long time disappear; and the asylums, which would still be required for friendless age, and helpless infirmity, might be so regulated as to acquire a religious use and a religious character. They who exert themselves in promoting these objects, and such as these, are the genuine patriots, the true reformers, the real friends of the people.

But if these things were done, says the metaphysical politician, the country would be overstocked; Mr. Malthus's discovery must be remembered, and the 'new science of population!' ..The new science of population!..First-rate powers display themselves in the same manner in all ages. Alter but the place and time of their birth, and the Aristotle of Greece would have been the Bacon of England; Æschylus might have been our Shakspeare, Demosthenes have led a House of Commons, and the Hannibal of one time have been the Wellington of another. Great men set their stamp upon the age, ..it is otherwise with the small craft, the age sets its stamp upon them. Men of genius work like the sculptor for posterity upon enduring materials; the second and third-ratelings compose works of perishable stuff to the fleeting fashion of the day. The same temper of mind, which in old times *spent itself* upon scholastic questions, and at a

later age in commentaries upon the Scriptures, has in these days taken the direction of metaphysical or statistic philosophy. Bear witness, Political Economy! Bear witness, Bullion and Corn Laws! Bear witness, the New Science of Population! and the whole host of productions to which these happy topics have given birth, from the humble magazine essay, up to the bold octavo, and more ambitious quarto. The type of the disease has varied at different times, but the disease remains the same... a colliquative diarrhœa of the intellect... arising from its strong appetite and weak digestion.

To legislate upon theories of population would be as absurd as if a physician upon some theory of pneumatics were to set respiration to music, and order all his patients to regulate their breathings by the time. You might as well attempt to regulate the seasons, or to legislate for hunger and thirst. A numerous population is, like the Amreeta cup of Kehama, the greatest of evils or the greatest of blessings, according to the government which wields it. A people properly instructed in their duty, and trained up in habits of industry and hope, which induce prudence, can never be too numerous while any portion of their own country remains uncultivated, or any part of the habitable earth uncolonized. To reason against the amelioration of society from such an apprehension is worse than folly. Under the most favourable circumstances which the most ardent enthusiast can contemplate, millenniums *must* pass away before the earth could be replenished;... till that time the first commandment

which man received from his Creator stands unrepealed, . . and if ever that time should come, the Creator may then be trusted : meantime it is the truest policy and the highest duty to improve the condition of the poor. The better the people are instructed, the happier and the better they will become ; the happier they are, the more they will multiply ; the more they multiply, the greater will be the wealth, and strength, and security of the state ; and these maxims are as certain as the laws of nature and of God.

ESSAY VI

ON THE

**ACCOUNTS OF ENGLAND BY FOREIGN
TRAVELLERS,**

AND

THE STATE OF PUBLIC OPINION.

1816.



ESSAY VI.

ON THE ACCOUNTS OF ENGLAND BY
FOREIGN TRAVELLERS,

&c. &c.

IN the early part of the last century King Joam V. of Portugal was disposed to travel incognito, and instructions were by his orders prepared for him, by D. Manoel Caetano de Sousa, how to obtain the greatest possible information during his tour. A copy of this paper is in the Pinheiro collection of transcripts. His majesty was directed to ask two hundred and twelve questions wherever he went; to five and forty of which, concerning climate, soil, mountains and fountains, geography and topography, cultivation and population, it was supposed he would meet with satisfactory answers upon the road, and at the inns at which he should put up. When he came to a town he was to inquire if there were any books which described the place; and if he found such, to compare the written description with the place described. He was to find out the principal church in every place, ascertain its length, breadth, and height, and examine all the parts and proportions as accurately as if he had been a mast

mason, and about to erect one upon the same plan. He was to make himself acquainted with all the municipal institutions; and in sea-ports and fortified places to enter into such minute inquiries as would probably soon have reduced his majesty to the necessity of revealing who he was, and in our days would have introduced him to Fouche in France, and the Alien Office in England. He was to learn how the streets were cleaned, what precautions were taken against contagion, how the inhabitants kept themselves cool when it was hot weather, how they warmed themselves when it was cold, how they guarded against inundations, what sort of ovens were in use, what sort of chimneys they constructed, if there were good fencing-masters there, and good riding-masters, who the learned men were, and what books they had written.

A book, with a long title, to the same purport, was published some years ago in English by Count Leopold Berchtoldt, a very extraordinary man, who has written books in every European language, and in Arabic also. German-like, he sorted, sifted and separated, divided and subdivided all the topics of inquiry; and the traveller who should follow the letter of his instructions, would have to go through a catechism ten times as long as that which was prepared for the King of Portugal. But good advice will no more make a good traveller, than it will a good painter or a good poet. The more systematically a book of travels is written, the worse it is likely to prove. *An author who rides fast through a country, and relates all that he saw and heard on his way,*

will make a more amusing journal, and probably a less erroneous one, than if he had asked the whole two hundred and twelve questions of D. Manoel Caetano de Sousa, or followed Count Leopold's instructions to the letter.

Many works have recently been published as containing the remarks of foreign travellers upon our own country. Some of them, in which the characters of a German and of a Russian are personated, are written in imitation of Espriella's letters; but the writers have not knowledge enough of Germany and Russia to support the characters which they have assumed, and have not always thought it necessary to visit the places which they venture to describe. It is neither safe to travel by the map, nor to write travels by it. . . There is a French account of English manners written by a Frenchman who never was in England; . . some merit, however, is due to him on the score of industry, for having collected anecdotes and jests out of number, and thereby enriched his own language with apothegms from the work of that great English grammarian, Mr. Thomas Dyche, and with good things culled from the Collectanea of Mr. Joseph Miller, of facetious memory. Others are what they pretend to be. . . the genuine observations of foreign travellers who have seen more or less of England. From such books a judicious reader may derive a double advantage; by the hasty conclusions which are drawn from misapprehended facts, and the many errors which he cannot fail to detect, he will learn not to rely implicitly upon the unfavourable accounts which his countrymen may publish of

other countries; and by seeing things in the light wherein they are seen by strangers, he may sometimes be taught more justly to appreciate his own.

It is to be regretted that the custom of writing travels should have begun so late, and that among the earlier travellers so few should have visited England. • Hentzner gives us a bad character in Elizabeth's reign; . . he says that the English are good sailors and famous pirates; cunning, deceitful, and thievish, . . *sunt boni nautæ et insignes pyratae, astuti, fallaces et furaces*. The first part of the character, as belonging to the age of Drake and Cavendish, must be taken for better for worse, as in both parts just. The cunning which is imputed to them agrees ill with the opinion of old Philippe de Comines, who * tells us that King Edward and his people went bluntly to work in their treaty, and could not understand the dissimulations which were used in France and elsewhere, being naturally choleric; . . 'but a man ' must have patience with them.' Our national character had ripened under the Tudors, and the *astuti* of whom Hentzner speaks were probably the long-headed statesmen of Elizabeth's court.

* *Le Roy Edouard ni ses gens n'avoient fort pratiqué les faits de ce royaume et alloient plus grossement en besogne; parquoy ne peurent si tost entendre les dissimulations dont on use deça et ailleurs; car naturellement les Anglois, qui ne sont jamais partis d'Angleterre, sont fort coleriques, comme aussi sont toutes les nations de pays froids. And again, Sans point de doute, comme j'ai dit ailleurs, les Anglois ne sont pas si subtils en traites et en appointemens, comme sont les François; et quelque chose que l'on en die, ils vont assez grossement en besogne; mais il faut avoir un peu de patience, et ne débattre point coleriquement avec eux.*

There was some foundation also for the worst part of the character which he gave our ancestors; the religious revolution had not then subsided; it had produced the opposite extremes of profligacy and hypocrisy, and the lower classes, owing to the great change in society which was taking place, were in a frightful state. He says that more than three hundred criminals were annually executed in London; and the population of London must at least have quintupled since that time. Yet that we were not worse than our neighbours, is manifested by the astonishment which the German expresses at seeing how the goldsmiths in London exposed their precious wares: and we had a character also for cleanliness and comfort. . . *pro regionis more bene et laute fuimus habiti*, is the account which he gives of his treatment at the inns. These were perilous times; more than thirty heads were exposed on London Bridge (1598), and the scaffold at the Tower was permanent. This was the natives' concern: to a foreigner, the most unpleasant circumstance was, that the roads about Dover were dreadfully infested by. . . ghosts.

A few years after the Restoration, M. Sorbieri published his Voyage to England. He travelled from Dover to London in the waggon, that he might not take post, or be obliged to make use of the stage coach; why the waggon was preferable to the stage coach he has not stated. 'It was drawn by six horses, one before another, and driven by a waggoner, who walked by the side of it: he was clothed in black, and appointed in all things like another St. George; he had a

‘ brave *montero* on his head, and was a merry
‘ fellow, fancied he made a figure, and seemed
‘ mightily pleased with himself.’ A German, who
in the year 1733 visited this country in the course
of what he calls a *voyage littéraire*, tells us that the
Dover stage started on Sunday morning, arrived
in Canterbury to dinner, and stopt there, awaiting
the London coach, which performed the remain-
der of the journey in one day. The fare for the
whole way was fourteen shillings. In a subsequent
journey, M. Sorbier was two days going in the
stage from London to Oxford. His lodgings,
‘ one pair of stairs near Salisbury House,’ cost
him a crown a week; he lived in good company,
and has preserved some interesting anecdotes of
Hobbes, and of the Royal Society then recently
established. M. Sorbier does not represent our
national character in flattering colours. ‘ The
‘ people,’ he says, ‘ are very lazy, which I can
‘ very well affirm without offence, for they do
‘ perhaps glory in their sloth, and believe that
‘ true living consists in their knowing how to live
‘ at ease.’ ‘ They have a natural inclination to
‘ laziness, presumption, and a sort of extrava-
‘ gance of thought, which is to be met with in
‘ their best writings; but after they have sub-
‘ jected these inclinations (for which,’ he candidly
adds, ‘ I do not blame them, because they pro-
‘ ceed from the nature of the climate), they are
‘ endued with very excellent qualities; for though
‘ some have had the hardiness to say that the
‘ English have skimmed the vices of other na-
‘ tions and despise their virtues, yet there is some-
‘ thing in them that is great, and which they

‘ seem to retain from the old Romans.’ . . ‘ When
‘ they have once obtained the necessaries of life,
‘ their idleness makes them careless of any more ;
‘ their pride keeps them back from pushing after
‘ superfluities, which others take so much pains
‘ to pursue.’ They are haughty toward stran-
gers, capricious and melancholy, very suspicious,
and full of hollow heartedness. Their insolence,
however, need not be regarded, for a ‘ worthy
‘ French gentleman, who travelled in the coach
‘ with him to Oxford, who spoke good English,
‘ and who had been a soldier under Cromwell for
‘ seven years, and who “ snubbed a student that
‘ affronted him,” assured him, that there “ were
‘ no people in the world so easily frightened into
‘ subjection as the English ; for as soon as ever
‘ you repress their insolence, you do the same by
‘ their courage, and all that they have is a sally of
‘ pride to cover their faint-heartedness and cow-
‘ ardly dispositions.’ They are mutinous subjects,
and yet may ‘ easily be brought to anything, pro-
‘ vided you fill their bellies ; let them have free-
‘ dom of speech, and do not bear too hard upon
‘ their lazy temper.’ These remarks seem to have
excited great indignation in England, and in no
person more than in Sprat, who published, in
consequence, some observations upon them, which
both in bulk and in liberality were nearly upon a
par with the work upon which he commented. The
few descriptions which Sorbieri had introduced
of the scenery and costume of England excite his
wonder and contempt ; and he sneers at him for
speaking ‘ romantically of the vallies, the hills,
‘ and the hedges of Kent ;’ for Sprat, though

the friend of Cowley, was incapable of conceiving that such things could occasion pleasure or admiration. The Frenchman had affirmed that 'there was a mixture of all sorts of government in the composition of our state;' 'notwithstanding,' says the courtly churchman, 'that we have so many acts of parliament that devolve the whole power on the crown!' He had censured the irregularities of the English drama, and Sprat in return censures him for his ignorance, such irregularities being the exploded errors of Elizabeth's reign, and laughed at by the improved taste of Charles II.; 'I,' he adds, 'might as justly impute the vile absurdities that are to be found in Amadis de Gaul to M. de Corneille, De Scudery, De Chapelain, De Voiture, and the rest of the famous modern French wits.' Sorbriere's book drew upon him a more serious notice..he was banished for it to the city of Nantes by an order under the king's signet; an act of great tyranny on the part of the French government, and,. . if it was in consequence of any formal complaint,. . of as great folly on the part of the English court.

The first article in the Harleian Collection of Voyages is an account of England, said to be translated from the manuscript of D. Manuel Gonzalez, a Portuguese merchant; this has been reprinted in Mr. Pinkerton's collection, without any suspicion of its authenticity; but it is manifestly the work of an Englishman, not improbably of Defoe. The 'Londres' of M. Grosley appeared at the beginning of the present reign. *His English*, his credulity, and his mistakes may frequently excite a smile; while, on the other

hand, the occasional wisdom of his remarks, the felicity of his language, and the good spirit and good temper which pervade the book, conciliate the reader's good will, even when they do not command his respect. His English is not a little curious; the light, he tells us, which our great church windows admit, is *nécessaire sans doute sous un ciel communément embrumé, mais éblouissante dans les* glorious dai. He describes the fashionable amusement of '*le boulingrin*,'.. and in the letter of his correspondent, M. Condamine, we learn that the boys in London will sometimes call a Frenchman *son babitch*. '*Le tost*,' M. Grosley informs us, 'is that part of the day in England in which, when the cloth is removed after dinner, when the ladies have retired, and when the dining-room has been *suffisamment garnie de pots-de-chambre, chacun, les coudes sur la table, se faisant passer de l'un à l'autre les bouteilles, boit et arrange l'état*.' When the members in the House of Commons would direct the attention of the opposite party to what is said in the debate, they exclaim '*Ya!*' '*ya!*' and the orator of the House is called in '*English Le Spik*.' Our language seems to consist wholly of monosyllables; for however long the word may be, the first syllable only is strongly pronounced, and the rest of the word, half-eaten, dies between the teeth. By way of illustrating this remark, he tells us, in another place, that the English pronounce the name of Cromwell as though it were spelt Caramuel. In this point, however, there were great hopes of us; every person learnt French, our villainous native tongue

would soon fall into disuse, and . . . *bientôt le François sera par choix la langue du peuple Anglois.* John Bull being thus disposed to *parley-vous*, M. Grosley no doubt hoped that the general introduction of a sprightlier form of speech might counteract the predominant melancholy of the nation . . . *cette triste affection*, the causes of which he makes the subject of deep and serious inquiry : they were to be found, he thinks, in our fogs ; in the humidity of our climate ; in our beef, which, being mingled in the stomach with beer, must produce a heavy and viscous chyle, which could only convey bilious and melancholic juices to the brain. Pit-coal is another cause of English melancholy ; and our method of observing Sunday after the Judaical manner is a certain specific for making a melancholy people. In proof of this he relates, that a young English officer, with whom he travelled from Ham to Calais, refused to sing a song one Sunday, because it was not the proper day ; and in like manner refused to sing a psalm, because it was not the proper place : . . . good proof that the English are a melancholy nation ! Very possibly, he thinks, this melancholy making the people habitually indifferent to life, may have contributed greatly to their military exploits. So prone are they indeed to suicide, that there is a particular prayer in the Liturgy against it. High balustrades are placed upon all the bridges to prevent it, and the banks of the Thames are, as far as possible, carefully blocked up ; yet he himself saw eight-and-twenty skulls taken up from *that part* of the river where the new bridge was *then building* ; and as this was a chance sample

of the whole river, if eight-and-twenty were found in that line, the bed of the Thames may be said to be paved with them!

Perhaps this extraordinary assertion may have originated in ignorance of the language, and in that improper license of speech wherein travellers and story-tellers are apt to indulge, expressing themselves as having seen that of which they have only read. There are persons who take a mischievous pleasure in giving false information to such travellers as are collecting materials for a 'Tour,' with less judgement than industry. Instances of this may be found in the splendid quartos of living authors; and M. Grosley seems occasionally to have been deceived in this manner. Indeed, if we mistake not, it was in a first edition of his work that a charge of scandalous immorality was brought against the Londoners; . . . whenever he approached the water-side, the writer said, men came running out of the public-houses and crying to him, *Oars! oars!* which word, not being well acquainted with English orthography, he interpreted into the very worst sense which the sound can bear, and concluded that the watermen were persons employed thus coarsely and broadly to invite him into a brothel. The story of the *sculls* is perhaps of the same nature, . . . a mischievous friend may have told him that he had seen eight-and-twenty *sculls* lying at Blackfriars Bridge; and he, taking *sculls*, like *oars*, in the wrong acceptance, may have fallen into the unhappy error of making himself the spectator, and drawing the prodigious conclusion that the bed of the Thames was lined with human bones. It is beyond all

doubt that he was sometimes thus wantonly imposed upon, or, to use a word which seems now to be naturalized, thus *mystified*. He tells us, that mothers in England made it a part of the education of their children to take them to executions, and flog them when they returned, by way of imprinting the lesson on their memory. And to exemplify the love of uniformity for which the English are remarkable, he tells us, that a man having lost a leg by an accident, chose to have both cut off, that he might have a pair of wooden legs instead of an odd one! The public papers, he says, recorded this fact with admiration, . . . and this foolish story is repeated as authentic in some of the recent publications upon England! We have dwelt only upon the errors of this writer, but with no intention of detracting from him: . . . with all his credulity and his blunders, . . . and notwithstanding the presumption of writing an account of a city in which he had only passed two months, Grosley is an amusing and sometimes a sagacious writer; a Frenchman would lay down his book with a kindly feeling toward the English, . . . and an Englishman may be well pleased with the temper and disposition of the author.

In the year 1782, Moritz, a Prussian clergyman, made a seven weeks' visit to England, and published an account of his adventures there. He came over with a warm heart, an illfurnished purse, and as large a stock of simplicity as Parson Adams himself. After remaining three weeks in London, he set off for Derbyshire, with a book of *the roads* and a map, '*Paradise Lost*,' no more *linen* than he could carry in his pocket, and four

guineas. Of course he journeyed on foot; inn-keepers were not so much accustomed to see pedestrians in those days as they are now; and he sometimes felt 'the hardship of his lot in being ' obliged to travel in a manner that exposed him ' to the scorn of a people whom he wished to ' respect.' The inhospitable and even brutal manner in which he was frequently treated, was perhaps in some degree occasioned by suspicion; and it is as much to the credit of his good sense as of his good nature, that he never, in a moment of resentment, casts any imputation upon the national character for the ill usage which he experienced. Being pressed for time on his return, he determined to take the stage for part of the way, . . . a portion of his travels which is so curious, that it can only be given with due effect in his own words.

' This ride,' says he, ' from Leicester to Northampton, I shall remember as long as I live.

' The coach drove from the yard through a part of the house. The inside passengers got in in the yard; but we on the outside were obliged to clamber up in the public street, because we should have had no room for our heads to pass under the gateway.

' My companions on the top of the coach were a farmer, a young man very decently dressed, and a blackamoor.

' The getting up alone was at the risk of one's life; and when I was up, I was obliged to sit just at the corner of the coach, with nothing to hold by but a sort of little handle, fastened on the side. I sat nearest the wheel; and the

‘ moment that we set off, I fancied that I saw
‘ certain death await me. All I could do was to
‘ take still safer hold of the handle, and to be more
‘ and more careful to preserve my balance.

‘ The machine now rolled along with prodigious
‘ rapidity over the stones through the town, and
‘ every moment we seemed to fly into the air; so
‘ that it was almost a miracle that we still stuck
‘ to the coach and did not fall. We seemed to be
‘ thus on the wing, and to fly as often as we
‘ passed through a valley or went down a hill.

‘ At last the being continually in fear of my
‘ life became insupportable, and as we were going
‘ up a hill, and consequently proceeding rather
‘ slower than usual, I crept from the top of the
‘ coach and got snug into the basket.

‘ “ O, Sir, Sir, you will be shaken to death ! ”
‘ said the black; but I flattered myself he ex-
‘ aggerated the unpleasantness of my post.

‘ As long as we went up hill it was easy and
‘ pleasant; and having had little or no sleep the
‘ night before, I was almost asleep among the
‘ trunks and packages; but how was the case
‘ altered when we came to go down hill! then all
‘ the trunks and packages began as it were to
‘ dance around me, and every thing in the basket
‘ seemed to be alive, and I every moment received
‘ from them such violent blows that I thought my
‘ last hour was come. I now found that what the
‘ black had told me was no exaggeration; but all
‘ my complaints were useless. I was obliged to
‘ suffer this torture nearly an hour, till we came
‘ to another hill, when quite shaken to pieces and
‘ badly bruised, I again crept to the top of the

‘coach, and took possession of my former seat. “Ah! did I not tell you that you would be shaken to death?” said the black, as I was getting up; but I made him no reply. Indeed I was ashamed; and I now write this as a warning to all strangers who may happen to take it into their heads, without being used to it, to take a place on the outside of an English post-coach, . . . and still more, a place in the basket!’

Moritz, however, left England in perfect charity, notwithstanding his illtreatment and the adventure of the basket. Every thing which he saw served to impress him with a sense of the happiness of the English. The country appeared to him beautiful as Paradise, and he observed with astonishment that the roads in the vicinity of London were far more alive than the most frequented streets in Berlin. ‘The footway in London,’ he says, ‘paved with large stones on both sides of the street, appears to a foreigner exceedingly convenient and pleasant; as any one may there walk in perfect safety, in no more danger from the prodigious crowd of carts and coaches, than if one was in one’s own room, for no wheel dare come a finger’s breadth upon the curb-stone.’ He notices the general handsomeness of the people, . . . the natural manner of the boys, so different from the little mannikins of the continent, and the easy gradation of ranks in England, where high and low are not separated by a chasm as insuperable as that between Dives and Lazarus. He recognizes and admires the feeling which *makes the appellation of ‘liar’ the worst insult*

which can be offered to an Englishman; our church service and church music edified and affected him 'even to tears;' and the sight of a popular election, though he perceived that the license there was 'but the semblance of liberty, 'and that, too, tribunitial liberty,' warmed his heart.

'Yes, my friend,' he says, 'depend on it, when 'you see here how in this happy country the 'lowest and meanest member of society thus unequivocally testifies the interest which he takes 'in every thing of a public nature, . . . how high 'and low, rich and poor, concur in declaring 'their feelings and their conviction that a carter, 'a common tar, or a scavenger, is still a man and 'an Englishman, and as such has his rights and 'privileges, defined and known as exactly and as 'well as his king, or as his king's ministers, . . . take 'my word for it, you will find yourself very differently affected from what you are when staring 'at our soldiers in their exercises at Berlin.'

Without any pretensions to wit, sentiment, philosophy, or fine writing, the simple story of this Prussian Parson Adams has found its way into popular collections in England, and perhaps few books have ever communicated to the reader a more distinct conception of the author's character. A more comprehensive and methodical account of England was published at the same time by one Wendeborn, author of a German grammar, . . . a book of solid materials, heavily concocted, but collected with industry, and arranged for the purpose of *conveying* accurate and impartial information to *his countrymen*. Most of the later French travels

have been written with a very different feeling; a spirit of envious dislike is more or less apparent in all; to what an extent this spirit may be carried, is seen in the *L'Angleterre* of M. le Maréchal de Camp Pillet, Chevalier de St. Louis, Officer of the Legion of Honour, Grand Liar, and Knight of the Hulks! This indeed is a flagrant instance; but the best accounts of England which the French have yet published, are as little favourable to this country as they are little honourable to the national spirit which in this manner displays its unabated hostility.

M. Jean Baptiste Say is one of the least unfriendly of these writers, . . he even says he should rejoice in the prosperity of England as much as in that of France, and for this valid reason, which it is to be wished all statesmen, of every country, would bear in mind, that 'the prosperity of one country, so far from being incompatible with that of another, as the generality of men imagine, is, on the contrary, favourable to it.' Yet it would be difficult to believe that M. Say's opinions have not been coloured by his wishes, when he affirms that our taste for the arts has been by little and little corrupted, in consequence of our long exclusion from the classical ground of Europe; that for this reason our vases, candelabra, and furniture, have neither neatness, lightness, nor elegance; we have fallen back into a Gothic and unmeaning taste of heavy and complicated ornaments; and in the patterns of stuffs, and choice of colours, we are now behind the rest of Europe. At home, he says, the government possesses the means of making the English pay for

things more than their value, 'but it does not, 'thank God, possess the same power over the 'French, the Germans, or the Brazilians.' This same ejaculation of thanksgiving is no doubt to be understood when he assures us that our manufactures obtain little success in the great markets of Europe;...that if corn does not rise in price the agriculturists and the landholders must be ruined, and if it does, that in that case commerce and manufactures will be destroyed; in short, that we are reduced to this alternative,...to borrow for our annual expenditure...which is impossible, because it is already difficult to pay the interest of the existing debt;...or under some shape or other to cease to pay the interest, and 'thus create a 'bankruptcy more or less disguised.' In this opinion M. Say is supported by the Morning Chronicle, a journal which for becoming national feeling, and felicitous political predictions, may vie with the Northern prophets; but M. Say is neither so senseless nor so dishonest as to dissemble that this would be an act of political suicide, which would bring the whole system to the ground. There might, however, he adds, be a third alternative,...'to lessen the expense by 'ceasing to embroil and agitate Europe, Asia, 'and America: but this is not likely to be 'adopted.' The French have repeated against us this charge of embroiling the world till they really seem to believe it! But we must not wonder at hearing it from them, when there are men in our own country wicked enough and traitorous enough *to repeat, month after month, and week after week, and day after day, the same falsehood!*

The anonymous author who has laid Dyche's Spelling-book under contribution, and compiled so largely from Joe Miller, does not venture upon prophecy, and deals but little in political matter; . . that little however is rich in its kind. 'O French-
'men, O my dear compatriots,' he repeats after some Frenchmen as sage as himself, 'once for all, 'beware of those who are incessantly citing 'England to you as a model! Your laws and your 'government are far superior to the laws and ad-
'ministration of Britain!' In England, he tells us, every thing is decided by money; it is money that makes our judges, our magistrates, our members of parliament, generals, admirals, and ministers! Everything in England is venal: our county members are the slaves of the minister's will and the instruments of his passions. Generally speaking, we are an ignorant people; in the provincial towns the people hate learning, and yawn at the sound of Latin. And as for our national courage, it is a great mistake to suppose that the English are a brave people; that which is mistaken for courage in them, is a certain strength of character which perhaps is not found in the French, but which is only a disease of the mind, occasioned by excess in beef, and by the high duties upon wine, and leading to suicide. Suicide and consumption, as we learn from this judicious writer, were not known in England before the battle of Agincourt; but Henry V. thought proper after that battle to enact, that no Englishman should drink wine without mixing it with water; why this enactment should have *been made*, or in what archives the writer has dis-

covered it, he has not thought fit to impart ; but so, according to him, it was ; and from that time the English character became *triste*, taciturn, melancholic ; consumption became the national disease, and suicide the national form of madness. The philanthropic author has kindly pointed out the means of delivering ourselves from these rooted evils ; it is but to plant vines in our colonies, and import their produce in great quantities, . . to allow of balls and spectacles on Sundays, . . and to have organs and good musicians in the churches ; . .

‘ *Alors l’atmosphère changerait dans dix à quinze années ; la fureur du suicide serait arrêté ; le peuple deviendrait gai, sociable et heureux.*’ Excellent as this is, it is not entirely original ; the writer seems to have pursued a happy discovery of M. Grosley (upon whom, indeed, he has drawn largely for materials) : that earlier observer suggests that nothing would be so beneficial to the interests of England, physical, moral, spiritual, and political, as the free use of wine ; it would make the English, he affirms, more active and less speculative ; more addicted to gaiety, and less to reasoning ; fonder of life, less atrabilious, less occupied with politics, and therefore better subjects ; less theological, and therefore more religious. The political interests of England, and the financial interests of France, are alike concerned, as he shews us, in reducing the duties upon wine, . . *il seroit, en effet, très-singulier que la chaleur des esprits et des révolutions en Angleterre y eût une progression graduée, en raison de l’augmentation des droits d’exciise sur le vin.* Consumption, jaundice, suicide, heresy,

and sedition, all to be prevented by lowering the duties upon wine! Look to it, Mr. Vansittart! and ask yourself if, as a man and a minister, you can conscientiously suffer the continuance of these evils when the remedy is so easy.

Concerning the courage of the English, derived as it is from beef, and still more from mutton, the world has been greatly mistaken; though the truth upon this point was long ago seen by Sorbiere. In Louis the XIVth's time, says the anonymous compiler, the French sailors used to say . . . if they are Dutch, we shall fight them; if they are English, we shall beat them: . . . *s'ils sont Hollandais nous nous battons; s'ils sont Anglais, nous les battons. Cela était passé en proverbe.* A stranger, we are told, lands at London; in that city *parfaitement libre* he meets the press-gang ten times in an hour pursuing the passengers to make sailors and soldiers by blows with a bludgeon. The next day he goes to Portsmouth, goes on board a ship, and finds half these involuntary heroes in chains below deck. On the day after, he arrives at Brest; the sailors who are hastening thither without constraint and without guards, are disputing with each other the honour of embarking first. The enchanted traveller goes from vessel to vessel; he sees every where, in animated colours, the stamp of courage and of liberty. So far so good: but why does this enchanted traveller proceed no farther? Why does he not tell us how the gay volunteers on the one side, and the melancholy pressed sailors on the other, behaved when they were in battle, and in what plight they entered Portsmouth together after the victory?

The name of the British Channel sounds ill in the ears of the Duc de Levis, and he asks, Who shall ensure proud Albion, that an enemy's besom shall not again be displayed in the Thames?.. So much for our navy. As for our army, the reader may be assured, upon the competent authority of a French peer, that though the English troops yield to none in courage, they are inferior to almost all in evolutions and military spirit; and that the age of our Edwards and Henries is past. Doubtless it is: but in the way of military character, the age of Wellington has placed us upon as good a footing with our neighbours. But it seems we have less reason to plume ourselves upon our Edwards and Henries than has generally been supposed; for a new salve has been discovered for the old sores of Cressy, and Poitiers, and Agincourt. We ought to speak with less pride of these victories; because the principal force of our armies, if we believe the Duc de Levis, consisted in soldiers drawn from the French provinces... Poor England!.. There are Portugeze, who tell us that they won for us all our battles in Spain; and in due time we shall probably be informed that it was the Belgians who won the day at Waterloo!

Much should be forgiven to national feeling; and it is as much the virtue of the French to love their own country, and feel a lively sense of her triumphs or reverses, as it is the vice of our oppositionists and Ultra-Whigs to take part on every occasion against England. When the Duc de Liancourt, travelling as an emigrant in Canada, and being received there not merely with hospitality, but with the respect due to his rank, and cha-

racter, and misfortunes, gave vent to a strain of bitter and even hostile reflections against the country by which Canada was conquered from France, his English readers respected the principle in which those feelings arose, whatever they thought of the prudence or propriety of thus manifesting them. The Duc de Levis also touches upon Canada, and tells us that it adds little to the glory of our arms, and proves this by a notable piece of secret history, which, it must be admitted, comes upon high authority. In the battle wherein Wolfe fell, the command of the French, after Montcalm's death, devolved upon the Chevalier, afterwards Maréchal de Levis, father of the present writer, and he...beat the English;...yes, reader, beat them in a pitched battle;...*but*...oh, most unfortunate conjunction disjunctive!...*but* in the very midst of his success, a total want of ammunition compelled him to yield to those whom he actually had defeated!*

The son of the commander who so unluckily lost the battle which he had won may naturally be excused for believing that this was the case, and that the glory of that bloody day belongs to France, not England...to the Chevalier de Levis, and not to Wolfe. He, like the Duc de Liancourt, observes with cordial hope that the Canadians have preserved their religion, their manners, and their

* *Lorsqu'après des succès balancés, le Chevalier (depuis le Maréchal de Levis) succédant au brave mais malheureux Montcalm, eut pris le commandement en chef des troupes, il battit les Anglois dans une bataille rangée, et ce fut au milieu de ses succès que le dénuement total de munitions de guerre toujours interceptées, le força de se rendre aux vaincus.*—Tom. i. chap. 15, p. 363, London Edition.

language, and that they are still French in heart; and he points out, among the other advantages which France would derive from the possession of her former colony, the ascendancy which it would give her over the councils of the United States.

The Duc de Levis cannot begin his 'History of London' without comparing it to Carthage. Carthage, he says, was a golden Colossus with feet of clay, which the sword of the Romans overthrew, *et Londres est peut-être chancelante sur ses monceaux de guinées*. And supposing that France would be permitted to keep that extent of coast to the North and South which Buonaparte had annexed to the French empire, this union, he says, will perhaps, suffice to re-establish the equilibrium of the seas. The spirit which such opinions, or rather, such wishes, indicate, is more broadly expressed in a comparative essay between Richelieu and Pitt, by M. le Chevalier Gilibert de Mezliac. A peroration to the praise and glory of the Duc de Richelieu explains the author's motives for choosing such a subject; but it would augur ill for France, if the favour of a French minister were to be obtained by the publication of such absurd falsehoods, and the avowal of such bitter and rooted enmity towards England. It is declared in this book, that the world will one day be too narrow to contain France and England at once; and that one of the two must fall. Richelieu, it seems, foresaw this, and the whole of Mr. Pitt's policy proceeded upon a conviction of this truth! The author says that the name of Pitt *excites more admiration in France than in England*, and that the circumstances of the times are

somewhat delicate for the avowal of such opinions; and he professes *la plus grande estime* for the British ministry, and in particular for the British nation, whose generous conduct in these latter times, he says, has delivered France from the most hateful yoke: but these considerations need not deter him from writing impartially concerning Mr. Pitt. So he assures us that Lord Chatham, perceiving that the ruin of England sooner or later must inevitably be accomplished by France, sought to prevent it by ruining France; and instilled into his son William, as Hamilcar had done into Hannibal, an implacable hatred against the French. In pursuance of his father's plans, Pitt conceived the hope of blotting out France from the map of nations, and making this destruction her own work, by internal commotions which would tend to a general subversion of all principles and all social order, and then leave to England the commerce of the whole world. Such a plan could only be carried on 'by the dark tortu-
'osities of a consummate Machiavelism;' and having vowed in his heart an exterminating war to accomplish this end, he became . . the author and fomentor of jacobinical principles in France! No money, no artifices, no crimes were spared; the demagogues were encouraged and paid by him; . . the Duke of Orleans was his creature, . . the revolutionary leaders his agents, . . the Revolution his work. M. Mezliac does not go quite so far as the egregious General Sarrazin, who writes his last incomparable history upon the hypothesis that Buonaparte also was the agent of England, and that the battle of Waterloo was fought upon

a plan concerted between him and the British cabinet, and lost upon his part according to agreement, by combinations of greater skill and greater exertions than he had ever displayed in gaining a victory ; so much more difficult was it to be defeated with such soldiers, than to conquer with them . . to play the losing, than the winning game ! M. Mezhiac is somewhat more modest in his theory ; yet so little is he acquainted with the public and notorious transactions of the age concerning which he writes, that he praises the Prince Regent for having, at the commencement of his government, declared that he would never treat with France till the odious tyranny of Buonaparte should be overthrown. The Prince Regent and his ministers deserve every praise for their conduct towards France, . . except this.

Pitt's plans against France succeeded, because so many accidental circumstances favoured it. Such were the writings of the infidel philosophers who laboured so successfully to poison the morals of the French people ; but as Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Helvetius, &c. &c. could not very conveniently be agents of Pitt, most of these persons having died while he was a child, . . they were *accidental* co-operators. Such was the decayed state of the French finances ; the Chancellor of the English exchequer could have no control over them, . . but they were in such a state as *accidentally* to facilitate his projects. Such was that *Anglomania*, '*puis qu'il faut l'appeller par son nom,*' that caprice, that ridiculous madness which turned all the heads in France ; a people who till then had served as a model for the rest of

Europe, by the delicacy of their taste and the elegance of their manners, hastening to abandon that flattering empire, by denaturalizing their character in imitating the *ton*, and the rude and almost barbarous manners of their neighbours. In a word, 'Athens (to wit, Paris!) disdained the grace and politeness of Pericles and of Aristophanes to intoxicate itself with the Thracians, and 'to imitate the savage life of Sparta.' This also proved *accidentally* favourable to the atrocious plans of Mr. Pitt, which were assisted still more by the *accidental* consequences of the American war. Louis le Martyr, we are told, professed a declared and calm hatred of the English, and carefully pursued the great object of annihilating the British power; he found resources enough in the national energies to strike the terrible blow of 1778; and by a glorious, but fatal vengeance, deprived us of America; but the destructive principles which were scattered abroad by that war took root in France, and thus also *accidentally* contributed to the success of Mr. Pitt! The feeling of national hatred must have been fostered till it acquired the strength of personal passion before a writer of common sense would utter absurdities like these. In reality, M. Mezliac hates England as heartily as General Pillet. Our Parliament, he tells us, is a ridiculous Colossus, raising its head in a civilized æra, while its feet rest in the mud of barbarous ages: our Government is a paper government; our liberty consists in the vain privilege of saying and writing what we please, whether right or wrong, under an actual and unlimited despotism; and for our

commercial prosperity and maritime power, the voice of ages raises itself to teach kings and people that of all scourges which men dread the most, that which inspires them with the greatest horror,..that which at all times they have combated with the greatest rancour, is..a commercial and maritime monopoly. As often as a people has sought to arrogate to itself this odious right, the cry of death and of vengeance has resounded among all its neighbours! the hatred of all nations has overwhelmed it,..its fictitious prosperity has vanished like a shadow; the formidable ramparts, the numerous fleets which protected the seat of its power, have been thunder-stricken and annihilated under the avenging blows of an hundred irritated nations. Opulent Tyre has not even left its traces upon the shores of Syria; scarcely can any ruins of the flourishing Carthage be found under the sand of the desert; and the sword of man seems to have engraved upon these deplorable ruins, that the Eternal created the ocean to be the common property of mankind. ‘The system of England is so much beyond its natural and intrinsic strength, that it bears within it the germ of death, and its factitious resources for its self-preservation must vanish before the first well-directed attacks of French energy.’ It might have been thought that the gratuitous restitution of so many and such important colonial conquests might have convinced France of the moderation of England, and silenced for ever the senseless cry concerning maritime and commercial monopoly;..it might also have been *thought*, that if any Frenchman dared even to

dream of the conquest of England, the recollection of Waterloo would have awakened him.

It is indeed manifest that in the French writers of the present day, the feeling which generally prevails concerning England is not less hostile than that which was proclaimed from the tribunes of Robespierre and the *bureaux* of Buonaparte. Waving, however, for the present, the reflections which would naturally occur, some estimate may be formed of the power and judgment which these writers possess, by observing the general accuracy of their knowledge respecting the country whose secret policy they affect to understand, and whose downfall they are so willing to prognosticate. It may amuse the English reader to be informed that physicians wear long swords, and are always dressed in black; that our gentlemen who walk the streets on account of the accommodation which our pavement affords, wear boots and spurs in the winter; that sugared meat appears regularly at our tables; that the Lord Mayor has whole turtles served up in their shells; that on Christmas-day every person has at his table a *potage détestable*, composed of dry raisins and boiled prunes; that in 'the Bacchanalian exercise' of toasting, the lover gives his mistress, the merchant his correspondent, the clergyman his bishop, the bishop his primate, and the primate the Protestant cause, *...et l'on s'enivre ainsi de la façon du monde la plus polie*: that when you dine at an Englishman's house, you know his politics by his dinner; a ministerial man gives you French rolls; at a patriot's you get only stale bread: the ministerialist gives soup in his first course, and made-

dishes; at an oppositionist's table you have an enormous piece of boiled beef, flanked with carrots boiled in water, and with cabbages seasoned with the same sauce! A huge hare, with gooseberry sauce, is an excellent patriotic dish: ministerial men drink French wines; an oppositionist and a friend of liberty would be disgraced were he not to prefer Port to Claret or Burgundy; and a good republican ought to get drunk with nothing but what is of home manufactory. The Presbyterians and malcontents dine always upon calve's head on the 30th of January, at the sign of the John the Baptist. Every body knows the fondness of the English for pugilistic exercises: *ces sortes de combats s'appellent* boxes; women, as well as men, crowd to see the *box*. The author of the *Quinze Jours* witnessed one of these exhibitions, at which many well-dressed women were present. It is, however, due to this author, to say that he sets down nothing in malice, and has no other object in his inventions, (for such many of his adventures are,) than to excite a laugh. The *box* is an indispensable part of education, fathers and mothers make their children fight in their presence; the *professors* do the same at schools and at the English colleges; and the boxers begin by butting like rams. Highway robbery is so common, that a purse is regularly prepared for the highwayman; about twelve guineas is the common sum; it is a sort of duty which custom has established in favour of the robbers. The highwaymen, however, are well bred and gallant; and a handsome woman *is usually* franked for a salute. Chaises full of *Police officers* set out almost every evening from

London on a cruize, and the robbers, if taken, are hung upon the spot where the crimes were committed, fastened to the gallows, and left to figure there in their perukes and full dress; for, gentle reader, every person who is hanged in England must be well shaved and dressed for the operation: he must have a peruke *bien-frisée*, a pair of white gloves, and a nosegay in his hand! They usually go drunk with spirits to the gallows! but every criminal has the right of presenting a petition in person to the king!

The *crebs* at which Englishmen ruin themselves and their families by enormous bets, must, we suppose, be *clubs*. The *amateurs outrés* of horse-racing, or ultra-men of the turf, are called black-legs, from the colour of their boots, which they never take off; and the Bond-street loungers derive their appellation from that light repast in the middle of the day which they take in the *eating shops*, and which is called *lounge*. The patriots in England are called *les anciens Wigths*, or, according to another authority, *les Wighs*. This, however, is less curious than the accuracy of the French journalist, who quoted the Independent Whig by the title of *La Perruque Indépendante*. *L'île de Wiggh* (from whence, perhaps, the patriots take the name) is the Cythera of the English, and the place of resort for stolen marriages. But the reader will by this time be disposed to cry *Ohe jam satis!* and we may say with the poet,

‘So of enough, enough; . . . and now no more.’

The ‘Journal’ of the French traveller, M. Simond, has no blunders of this kind, no illiberality, no hostile feeling, and few prejudices of any

kind. The writer indeed, being born in France, having resided twenty years in America, and married an Englishwoman, was so connected with the three countries as to have the strongest moral reasons for wishing the prosperity of all. He spent two years in England without any other object than that of seeing the country: and few travellers have seen so much of it. His book has appeared under some disadvantages in England; it was ushered into the world with a pert, puffing advertisement, and is disfigured with paltry prints containing some of the very worst representations of noted places that we ever remember to have seen. There is also a self-sufficiency in the writer detracting something from the respect to which his general good sense largely entitles him; he has no relish for Handel, none for Raffael or Niccolo Poussin, none for Milton; and he speaks contemptuously of the greatest musician, the greatest painters, and the greatest poet, without suspecting any deficiency in his own ears and eyes and intellectual faculties. But in the main, the book bears marks of an observant, candid, and intelligent mind; to other countries it will impart much information respecting the real state of England; in this it must necessarily be read with less interest than elsewhere; but it is one of those works which derives value from time; that which conveys no knowledge, and imparts little amusement to the present generation, may communicate both when this age shall have passed away, and its momentous annals are become a tale of the times *that are gone*.

Coming from New York, and accustomed dur-

ing so many years to American society, M. Simond compares what he saw in England rather with America than with his native country. He praises the comfort and cleanliness of his lodgings at Falmouth, one of the last places where an Englishman would find either; but such accommodations, he says, would cost more in the smallest town in America, or in fact could not be had. He finds the servants not only more obliging and industrious than those in the New World, but as looking better pleased and happier than persons of the same station in the land of political equality; where indeed the ostentation of what is as substantially enjoyed in England serves only to excite vulgar insolence, and create feelings of discontent. The poor did not appear to him so poor as in other countries, and the most wretched cottages in our Devonshire villages had a something which was wanting in America; they were 'very poor indeed, but the windows generally whole and clean; no old hats or bundles of rags stuck in as in America, where people build but do not repair.' These marks of squalid poverty are to be found among us, but they are not frequent enough to meet the eye of a traveller. He thought there were far fewer children to be seen about the houses; . . the old world is not less prolific than the new, and the children were probably at school or at work. Our rivers suffer by comparison with the Delaware, and the Hudson, and the St. Lawrence. He repeats the story of a lady, who, asking an Englishman if they had in England any rivers like the Seine, interrupted herself, and added *laughingly*, 'How can I be so silly? it is an island';

there are no rivers!' And M. Simond adds, 'I really think the lady was not so very much in the wrong.' He seems to think that the beauty of a river must be in proportion to its magnitude, and so determined is he to see nothing beautiful in the rivers of an island, that when speaking of the prospect from Richmond Hill, he says the prospect would not be materially injured if the Thames were dried up, 'and its muddy bed filled and sanded over.' It is no wonder that he has so little knowledge of pictures and of poetry! that he should call the song of the nightingale 'a lively, pleasing, vulgar sort of melody;' and say that Hamlet is 'one of the most ill-conceived and inexplicable of Shakspeare's plays.' Such opinions in all matters of taste might be expected in the man who can see no beauty in the Thames at Richmond. *Non omnes omnia possumus*; and it is well for us that we cannot; for if all men possessed the same powers, coveted the same objects, and pressed forward after the same pursuits, there would be more bickering and jostling than there is in a world wherein, Heaven knows! there is already but too much. The painter has no need of the musician's ear; the musician stands as little in want of the painter's eye: the analyzing and anatomizing spirit, which the physical sciences demand would stifle the imagination and deaden the feelings of a poet; while the man of business and the man of the world require only such talents as are the world's current coin, and bear the impress of the age. In some rare instances, indeed, the *germs* of every intellectual faculty seem to have been given in such proportions, that the gifted

possessor might have attained to pre-eminence in any line which he chose; but life is not long enough to cultivate them all, and perhaps the mind, in this its limited sphere, has not scope for their developement. If the ruling faculty does not, like Aaron's rod, swallow up the rest (which it seems to do where great powers of calculation exist, or an extraordinary verbal memory,) yet, like trees in a thicket, that which shoots up with most vigour overtops the rest, and, by overshadowing, dwarfs them. These remarks are applicable to the writer before us, by whose faults they have been suggested: he is a wretched connoisseur, and a miserable critic, and, like most critics, presumptuous in proportion to his incapacity: but he reasons with candour and sagacity upon subjects within his reach, and we shall revert to his remarks, more especially to his political observations, with the respect which they deserve.

Laying aside his volumes for the present, we must notice those of Mr. Silliman, who visited Europe with the pleasant and honourable commission to purchase philosophical and chemical apparatus, and books for Yale College in Connecticut. Coming in this character, the American traveller brought with him such feelings as became a man of letters and a member of that commonwealth in which all distinctions of country should be forgotten, or remembered only when principles and paramount interests are at stake. His *Journal* represents England to the Americans as it is, and exhibits to the English a fair specimen of the real American character. For there

are two distinct classes of people in America ; the descendants of those old settlers who carried with them habits of strict morality and austere religion ; and the modern swarm of emigrants, renegadoes and refugees, who are neither incommoded with one nor the other. The former have outgrown the intolerance and bigotry of their ancestors, but retained their virtues, and embellished them by humaner manners ; they have been born under the form of government for which their fathers sighed in secret, and are republicans as much by principle and duty, as by prejudice and inheritance. Of such persons the federal party is chiefly composed. ‘ It has on its side,’ to use the words of the Gallo-American traveller, ‘ a decided majority of the talents, the wealth, and the *gentility* of the country ; from all appearance, I might say, ‘ of the morality also’ . . he adds, ‘ if I was not ‘ aware that much may be placed to the account of ‘ principles which are the effect of situation.’ Most of the men who from principle bore arms against England during the revolution are now of this, which is the English party, to which Washington himself adhered during the last years of his life. But this party is as inferior in numbers as it is superior in every moral and intellectual qualification to the democrats, as they style themselves. Many of these are descended from persons who left England, not on account of their virtues, nor for their good deserts ; a large proportion are emigrants of the present generation ; of this class undoubtedly there are many who left their native *country* in the hope of bettering their condition *by honest and honourable industry* ; others to

whom error only is imputable, who imagined that more liberty must be enjoyed under a republican government than, in their imagination, existed here; but there are also political desperadoes whose revolutionary schemes had been frustrated at home, . . . refugees, not for conscience-sake, nor for any principle, political or religious, but for the sake of escaping their creditors and the laws of their country; adventurers of the worst description, men of no fortunes, or of broken ones, with principles as loose as their allegiance, inflamed hearts and blasted characters, . . . the disgrace of the country which they have left, and the pest and scandal of that which has received them. It is certain that far the greater number of those newspapers which laboured so assiduously to create a war between England and the United States, and which during that war endeavoured not less assiduously to exasperate it by every imaginable means of insult and audacious falsehood, were edited, not by Americans, but by emigrants, Scotch, Irish, and English.

Mr. Silliman is a good representative of the best American character. He is republican enough, while he admires the cheerfulness and willingness of the servants in England, to consider the surly manners of the same class in America, and ‘*the sullen salvo for personal dignity*’ with which they render their services, as proceeding from a cause which a patriot would not wish to remove, . . . the multiplied resources and superior condition of the lower orders in America. No person will dispute the position that *lesser evils are to be disregarded when they necessarily*

arise from a greater good; that position, however, is not applicable here. The inconvenience, in itself not inconsiderable, and of which all Americans complain, arises from the absurd manner in which principles of political equality have been promulgated; and instead of being, as Mr. Silliman persuades himself, indicative of a happier state of things than exists in England, it is symptomatic of a most perilous disease in the body politic. Universal suffrage has literally made the people the sovereign in America; and the Gallo-American traveller has most ably pointed out the dangers which for that reason are in full view. Governors must obey the sovereign people or be dismissed, . . but the sovereign people are the multitude, and the multitude are the poor; they envy the rich; and in America there is nothing to soften inequality of wealth; . . no ties of hereditary respect, . . no gradations of rank, . . scarcely any distinction but the broad and perilous one between the poor and the rich. The measures of government in America must therefore be unfavourable to the rich, and consequently to commerce, which is in that country the only road to riches.

‘A little more poverty in the multitude,’ says this judicious writer, ‘and property will fall an easy prey by such means as an income tax assessed arbitrarily by commissioners in support of any popular measures, . . by the establishment of a national paper money, . . by a *maximum*, perhaps. The insecurity of property will then operate, as it has done everywhere, in Turkey, in *Persia*, for instance, and in a less degree in those parts of Europe where the government

‘ could raise arbitrary taxes on industry, and where the administration of justice was dependent. The insecurity of property is invariably followed by relaxation of industry and improvements, ignorance and rudeness, and finally the establishment of a simple arbitrary government. It is no new observation, that every revolution contains the seeds of another most opposite in its nature, and scatters them behind it. We have yet to see what is to spring up in America from a purely popular revolution.’

Mr. Silliman is disgusted with our Vauxhall, and with the open and scandalous immoralities by which the London theatres are disgraced; the principles which call forth this condemnation may be derived from the old Puritans, but they are well founded; and well regulated minds must acknowledge that the censure is but too well deserved. The prejudices of a white man who has been accustomed to the sight of slavery exist in him still so strongly, that he is disgusted at the catastrophe of Inkle and Yarico in the play*, and wishes it were possible ‘ to extricate Mr. Inkle,’ as he calls him, ‘ from so unpleasant an embarrassment as that of acknowledging a sable female for his wife,’ which, he says, in a great measure destroys the moral effect of the story. This is language which we should not have expected from a moral and religious man; but it shews how impossible it is to breathe without injury an atmosphere contaminated with slavery. Our young gentry appeared to him ‘ probably the handsomest

* The afterpiece that night happened to be *Tom Thumb*, and Mr. Silliman gravely criticises it as if it were a serious composition.

‘men on earth;’ this he ascribes in great measure to their habits of activity, which keep them in florid health, and to the ‘correctness’ of their dress. There is less finery, he says, than in America, and very few fops; ‘the footmen are ‘almost the only coxcombs seen in London.’.. Mr. Silliman, it is to be feared, did not happen to pass through Bond-street or St. James’s at the fashionable hours.

In the country he is struck with the great similarity of our domestic manners to those of New England, and expresses his surprise ‘that a ‘lapse of almost two centuries, and a state of ‘things in many important particulars so widely ‘different, should not have produced a greater ‘deviation in the new country from the original ‘manners and habits of the parent island.’ This we rejoice to hear: for assuredly no manners were ever more favourable to the developement of our moral and intellectual nature, nor more conducive to private happiness and public weal, than the domestic manners of England. Wherever these seeds are sown they will bring forth the same fruits; and the best wish that can be formed for mankind is, that they may be disseminated as widely as possible. Profligate demagogues, the renegadoes of one country and the pests of both, may assist an infatuated faction to excite and foster in the Americans a hatred towards England; but it is an unnatural hatred,..a monstrous enmity,..for no circumstance can possibly destroy the bonds of affinity between the two nations; they have *lisped* the same mother-tongue, they have been *fed* at the same breasts of religion, they derive

their knowledge from the same reservoirs and fountain springs; they communicate in the same bread of life. The American is indebted to England for every thing which has humanized, every thing which may adorn, every thing which can ennoble his character: and that the old Americans, . . . the genuine people of the country . . . feel this, is evinced by the volumes before us. England is to them what Italy and Greece are to the classical scholar, what Rome is to the Roman Catholic, and Jerusalem to the Christian world. Almost every hamlet, says Mr. Silliman, has been the scene of some memorable action, or the birth-place of some distinguished person. It is interesting to observe this feeling, and trace its manifestation in a writer who makes no ostentation of his feelings, and who never disfigures his plain and faithful journal by any affectation of eloquence or of sentiment. He visited Thomson's grave at Richmond, the house in which he had resided, and the summer-house in the garden where he composed many of his poems. He wished also to visit Pope's villa, and his grotto, and his willow, which had not then been cut down; but 'positive orders' had been given that no person should see the house, and 'we were obliged,' he says, 'to content ourselves with merely an external view of a building which was once honoured by the presence of the illustrious bard. I make no reflections,' he adds, 'on Sir John Briscoe, the present possessor: he may have the best reasons for this seemingly illiberal conduct.' At Hampton Court he was impressed with a thought 'partaking at once of moral grandeur and of grateful melancholy, that he was

‘ actually *in a palace*, and that kings, queens, ‘ and illustrious men had trod the boards that ‘ were then beneath his feet.’ He describes to his countrymen the colour, the flight, and the song of the skylark, ‘ so much celebrated by the ‘ poets;’ . . . and the Tower guns, ‘ of which they ‘ read so often in the newspapers,’ and which in latter years have so often excited the proudest feelings of patriotism and joy in every true Englishman within hearing of their triumphant sound. An American who remembers that he is English by descent, language, and religion, . . . that is to say, by every tie of moral and intellectual relationship, . . . may be envied for his sensations in England. Greece and Italy, however interesting the recollections which they awaken, and however sublime the thoughts and feelings which they may call forth, . . . give also a melancholy sense of earthly instability, and force upon us a humiliating contrast between elder and later times. But England, in the full glory of arts and arms, in the plenitude of her strength and the exuberance of her wealth, in her free government and pure faith, just laws and uncorrupted manners, public prosperity and private happiness; England, in each and all of these respects, presents an object not to be paralleled in past ages or in other countries, . . . an object which fills with astonishment the understanding mind, and which the philosopher and the Christian may contemplate not only with complacency but with exultation, with the deepest gratitude to the Almighty Giver of all good, and the most animating hopes for the further prospects and progress of mankind.

On his first entrance into London, the 'City of Cities,' as he justly calls it, the American traveller, who had been long anticipating the emotions which he should then experience, was not a little disappointed at finding himself perfectly unmoved; but he soon discovered the comfort of its accommodations, so different from those which an American city affords to a stranger, and found all the gratification which he had expected in beholding the capital of this great empire and its objects of ancient or modern interest: unlike in this to the Gallo-American writer, who, when he speaks of an old city, says that it is 'consequently' ugly; but that writer is as uniformly unfortunate in all observations connected with taste, as he is judicious in his general remarks. The contrast between these writers in taste and in feeling is curiously shewn by their remarks upon Oxford. M. Simond says, 'it looked old, dusty, and 'wormeaten, the streets silent and deserted.' 'No place,' says Mr. Silliman, 'ever impressed me with such feelings of admiration and awe, and I presume it is without a parallel in the world. Instead of the narrow and dirty lanes of trading towns, and the confused noise of commerce, there are spacious and quiet streets, with fine houses of stone. The whole town has an unrivalled air of magnificence and dignity.' M. Simond accredits the refuted calumnies of what he is pleased to call 'a certain illustrious literary association,' . . . to wit, certain writers in the *Edinburgh Review*, . . . and says that when Oxford ceased to teach exploded doctrines, it *taught nothing at all* in their stead. Mr. Silliman,

on the contrary, inquires farther, and is better satisfied, and affirms that the English universities have been greatly misrepresented in America. They cannot, he says, be fairly compared with the more circumscribed institutions in his own country: . . . if the parallel were to be made, it should be with some individual college, and then the American institutions would have less reason to shrink from the comparison; . . . 'comparatively his own colleges are more respectable than he had imagined, although in many things certainly inferior.' We cordially join him in the hope and expectation that the American colleges will become more and more honourable and useful to their country. Let the seeds of knowledge and improvement be sown where they will, the fruits are for all mankind.

Mr. Silliman acknowledges that the literary men of England write their language with more purity than most literary men in America, and that in England gross blunders at the bar and in Parliament are not so common as in the American Congress and courts of law: but he insists (and in italics) that *the English language is more correctly spoken at this time by the mass of the American, than by the mass of the English nation*. This assertion is founded upon a common and easy mistake as to the nature of provincial dialects, and upon a curious fact in the history of language. There are no provincial dialects in America; emigrants from all parts of Great Britain have met there, and intermixed with each other, and with natives of the country; the peculiarities of dialect have necessarily been melted

down into the general speech, which is common English; and this is the language, therefore, which all children learn as their mother-tongue. The low-bred Londoner does not transmit his vulgar shibboleth, and the child of the Northumbrian is free from the *burr* which sticks in the throat of his father. Dialects can only be preserved by collective bodies speaking the language which they acquired in their youth; they cannot therefore continue in promiscuous colonies. But there is a wide difference between provincial and vulgar dialects; the former is only a different and antiquated form of our genuine speech, and as such it is recognized, whenever men of genius have thought proper to write in it. Without referring to earlier or inferior writers, it is sufficient to mention Burns, . . . a poet of such exquisite felicity, that his writings are relished by persons who are obliged to study them as a foreign language. And in the 'Antiquary,' and the other novels from the same masterly hand, the mixture of northern dialects, which considerably impedes the pleasure of a south-country reader, must, in a far greater degree, enhance the delight with which these tales are perused by persons who are familiar in what we may be allowed to call our Doric dialect. Vulgarisms, on the contrary, are always offensive, and must exist wherever ignorance and vulgarity are found: from these, which are the real corruption of language, it is not possible that America should be more free than England. There are other corruptions which arise from fashion, affectation, and the various causes which are always *operating* to vitiate the style of the day and debase

literature : these also will be found in both countries, and plentifully in both ; the crop of weeds is one which never fails. With regard to Americanisms, as they are called, it would be unphilosophical in the extreme to condemn them by wholesale, as contraband. No author ever shackled himself by more absurd restrictions (not even the Lipogrammatists, or those who built altars and hatched eggs in verse) than Mr. Fox, when he resolved to use no other words in his history than were to be found in Dryden. The vocabulary of a living language never can be limited ; new words will frequently be set afloat, and if they are struck in the mint of analogy, . . if the standard be lawful, and the die good, they must become current coin. Such words, whether we receive them from America, or America from us, enrich the language, of which we are joint heirs, and which is the common wealth of both.

It is observed by Mr. Silliman, that the opinions of the English concerning his country are in violent extremes, America being with some another name for barbarism and anarchy, and with others for overflowing liberty, plenty, and happiness. There are individuals, he says, ' whose admiration of America knows no bounds, ' . . whose language concerning us is always that ' of extravagant encomium, and who heap odium ' upon their own country in proportion as they ' exaggerate the advantages of ours.' In the course of his travels, he fell in with Winterbotham, the dissenting minister, who being imprisoned in *the early part of the French Revolution*, for uttering *sedition* in a sermon, occupied the time of his con-

finement in the compilation of a history, or more properly an account, of America. Winterbotham's was a hard case: he himself always denied having used the expressions for which he was found guilty, and it was the firm belief of his friends and of his congregation, that he had been convicted upon false evidence: it is the more honourable to him, that being thus an aggrieved man, he should afterwards have condemned himself for entering into the views of the political reformers. 'I heard him say,' says Mr. Silliman, 'that he considered the views of his old coadjutors as hostile to religion and the best interests of mankind;' and in proof of this, he related a number of anecdotes concerning the communications made to him by his associates in Newgate, who had fallen into like condemnation. 'One of them told him that his views and those of his friends were not confined to the reformation of the government, and that when affairs should come into their hands, not a public teacher of religion should be suffered to exist.' Winterbotham, who had not contemplated such extremities, resolutely replied, 'Sir, I am a preacher; and the moment I get free from prison, I shall preach again.' 'Then, Sir,' replied his companion, 'I will be the first to plunge a dagger into your bosom.' This fact alone ought to prove what indeed no reflecting person can doubt, that if the fabric of government in this country were to be overthrown, the English Revolution would have its Robespierres and its Heberts; its proscriptions and persecutions; a course as bloody as that

which we have witnessed in France ; and, in all probability, a far more deplorable termination.

We will quote one more anecdote from Mr. Silliman, and in his own words. He relates it upon the authority of a very venerable and respectable man, to whom he was introduced at Edinburgh ; who was an early and intimate friend of Dr. Witherspoon ; and to whom those letters on the education of children, which are printed in Dr. Witherspoon's works, were originally written. This gentleman Mr. Silliman may well have thought old enough to have known the fact, and respectable enough to be entitled to full belief.

‘ It seems that Hume received a religious
‘ education from his mother, and early in life was
‘ the subject of strong and hopeful religious im-
‘ pressions ; but as he approached manhood they
‘ were effaced, and confirmed infidelity succeeded.
‘ Maternal partiality, however alarmed at first,
‘ came at length to look with less and less pain
‘ upon this declension, and filial love and reve-
‘ rence seem to have been absorbed in the pride
‘ of philosophical scepticism ; for Hume now ap-
‘ plied himself with unwearied and unhappily with
‘ successful efforts, to sap the foundation of his
‘ mother's faith. Having succeeded in this dread-
‘ ful work, he went abroad into foreign countries ;
‘ and as he was returning, an express met him in
‘ London, with a letter from his mother, informing
‘ him that she was in a deep decline, and could
‘ not long survive ; she said she found herself
‘ without any support in her distress ; that he
‘ *had* taken away that source of comfort upon

‘ which in all cases of affliction she used to rely,
 ‘ and that she now found her mind sinking into
 ‘ despair: she did not doubt that her son would
 ‘ afford her some substitute for her religion, and
 ‘ she conjured him to hasten to her, or at least to
 ‘ send her a letter, containing such consolations
 ‘ as philosophy can afford to a dying mortal.
 ‘ Hume was overwhelmed with anguish on receiving this letter, and hastened to Scotland,
 ‘ travelling day and night; but before he arrived,
 ‘ his mother expired. No permanent impression
 ‘ seems however to have been made on his mind
 ‘ by this most trying event; and whatever remorse he might have felt at the moment, he
 ‘ soon relapsed into his wonted obduracy of heart.’

This anecdote, if it were authentic, would have shewn what many anecdotes which are undoubtedly true have exemplified, how false philosophy restores the sting to Death, and gives again the victory to the Grave.

But Mr. David Hume, the historian’s nephew, has proved the story to be false, by unquestionable dates, and by a circumstance noticed in the manuscript memoirs of the late Dr. Carlisle, ‘ an eminent clergyman of the Scottish church, and ‘ friend of the historian.’ The circumstance, interesting in itself and decisive upon the subject, is thus related in the manuscript, as by this gentleman transcribed*. ‘ When David and the ‘ Hon. Mr. Boyle, brother of the late Earl of

* In a letter to the Editor of the Quarterly Review, where (in the paper now republished) this anecdote had been quoted from Mr. Silliman’s Travels, in the belief of its authenticity.

‘ Glasgow were both in London, *at the period*
‘ *when David’s mother died*, Mr. Boyle hearing of
‘ it, soon after went into his apartment, for they
‘ both lodged in the same house, where he found
‘ him in the deepest affliction, and in a flood of
‘ tears. After the usual topics of condolence,
‘ Mr. Boyle said to him, “ My friend, you owe
‘ this uncommon grief to your having thrown
‘ off the principles of religion: for if you had
‘ not, you would have been consoled by the
‘ firm belief, that the good lady, who was not
‘ only the best of mothers, *but the most pious*
‘ *of Christians*, was completely happy in the
‘ realms of the just.” To which David replied,
‘ “ though *I throw out my speculations to enter-*
‘ *tain and employ the learned and metaphysical*
‘ *world*, yet, in other things, I do not think so
‘ differently from the rest of mankind as you
‘ imagine.”

Hume is an author from whose high and well-deserved reputation it is very far from our wish to detract; he is a most able and delightful writer; and a very sagacious one upon all points in which a sense of religion is not required. But his nephew has been strangely mistaken in supposing that by relating this story he should repair the wrong which the American traveller had offered to the historian’s fame; for surely, the true anecdote (though of a less painful kind) is as little creditable to him as the false one. If he were conscious of a latent belief in those truths which are necessary for our consolation and support in the hour of affliction, as they are for our direction and our

only abiding comfort at all times, his excuse for endeavouring to shake the faith of others would be the less, and his sin proportionally the greater.

The Duc de Levis thinks that there is little for the infidel philosophy to do in England. The people of that country, so 'renowned for the rectitude of their judgement,' had, in his opinion, been 'cured of the deplorable follies of puritanism, even before the Revolution of 1688; and at this time it is not necessary to live long in England for discovering that theism is the most common religious opinion,' and that the Establishment is supported and respected merely as a useful institution. The Duke seems to believe that he compliments the English by delivering this opinion. Were it well founded, there would be no hope of that stability in our political constitution which the writer thinks certain. There are but three changes, he says, which the English constitution can undergo: it may become an absolute monarchy, the Parliament either being destroyed, or retaining only a nominal existence;..it may become an aristocracy, the monarchy being abolished, and Parliament uniting in itself the executive and legislative powers;..or it may become a democracy, administered by revocable and temporary representatives, the monarchy and the peerage being abolished. The Duke proceeds to shew with sufficient force, the reasons which render the two first of these changes in the highest degree improbable; the other alternative he dismisses with contempt: it is so little probable, he says, and such a government has so little analogy with the *manners, the habits, and the prejudices of our old*

Europe, that he shall not dwell upon it ; . . it would evidently be nothing more than a state of anarchy and transition. *That* indeed is certain ; such a system, wherever it exists, can *only* be a state of anarchy and transition ; . . but is it equally certain that we are in no danger of being brought into that state ?

‘ One thing,’ says the Gallo-American observer, M. Simond, ‘ surprises us more and more every day, . . it is the great number of people who disapprove, not only the present measures of ministers, but the form and constitution of the government itself. It is stigmatized as vicious, corrupt, and in its decay, without hope or remedy but in a general reform, and in fact a revolution. It appears to me that the friends of the administration, and of all administrations, are in a small minority : of the other two parties, one does not seem disposed to approve of any administration, and neither of the present. This is a most alarming state of things ; a spark might set the whole political machine in a blaze ; and yet looking around at the appearance of all things, it seems a pity that so much good should necessarily be abandoned in pursuit of better, and by the means of a revolution. Every body disclaims a revolution *à la Française* ; but who is so presumptuous as to fancy a revolution, when once begun, can be guided and stopped at pleasure ? ’

The question is easily answered : every revolutionary faction, and every revolutionary leader ; . . witness the Constitutionalists and the Girondistes, and the Cordeliers, and the Jacobines in France ;

witness La Fayette, Brissot, Petion, Danton, and Robespierre.

These were the first feelings of a judicious, dispassionate, and perfectly impartial observer. As he remained longer in England, and travelled farther from the metropolis, he thought that the spirit of discontent was in great measure confined to London; and that in the country fewer persons spoke of revolution, either to wish or fear it, or believe the people ripe for it. By this time he began to understand something of the excess to which the spirit of party is carried in England, to the destruction of all sense of right and wrong, honour, veracity, patriotism, and principle of every kind; but in supposing that the public themselves saw this in the same light, M. Simond was mistaken: 'party writers,' he says, speaking in particular of the anarchist journals, 'are not believed sincere, and without that belief there is no real persuasion.' This is true as far as it regards the well-informed class of society with whom the traveller conversed, and from whom he forms his judgment; but it is not to this class that the apostles of anarchy direct their inflammatory discourses; it is to the credulous, the ignorant, and the half-informed, that they address themselves; it is to the countrymen who sit round the ale-house fire, open-eared, sucking in sedition with their tobacco; it is to the manufacturers and journeymen, who believe in their weekly newspaper as they do in Leake's pills, and swallow both poisons with implicit faith; it is to the great mass of an uneducated people. That the great mass of our population should be in a state which renders them

the easy dupes of every mischievous demagogue, is not the fault of the present age ; we, at least, have seen and acknowledged the evil, and though no adequate measures have yet been adopted for remedying it, still a beginning has been made : but meantime the evil exists in its full force, and we feel but too sensibly how the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, according to the just ordinance of Heaven and the usual course of human events.

‘ The liberty of the press,’ says M. Simond, ‘ is the palladium of English liberty, and at the same time its curse, . . . a vivifying and decomposing principle, incessantly at work in the body politic. It is the only plague, somebody has said, which Moses forgot to inflict on Egypt. This modern plague penetrates, like the vermin of old, into the interior of families, carrying with it defamation and misery.’ The private nuisance, however, has been in a great degree checked by the heavy damages which were awarded some years ago in a case of flagrant slander. Before that time the infamous attacks which were made upon the characters of women, married or unmarried, rendered this abuse a national disgrace. But the public evil continues, and exists in an aggravated degree. ‘ There is not,’ says the American traveller, ‘ another government in Europe who could long withstand the attacks to which this is continually exposed ;’ and again, ‘ the threatening storms of faction hovering incessantly over the British horizon, . . . the exaggeration of debates, . . . the misrepresentation of party papers, . . . give to this country the appearance of being perpetually on

‘the brink of revolution.’ In his judgement the danger is more apparent than real, because military usurpation is impossible in a country like England, where the people are, by long habit and principle, averse to a military system; and because an ambitious reformer would find himself installed as minister by his success, and must then inevitably discover that the reforms concerning which he had long and loudly declaimed are impracticable. This indeed is certain. But it is not of usurpation that we are in danger; . . . usurpation, whether civil or military, is one of the latter stages of revolution; and overturn! overturn! overturn! is as much the maxim of the reformers, as it is the text of the Luddites, their practical disciples. However willing some among our demagogues might be to enact the part of Lord Protector, their leaders resemble Cromwell as little in their talents as in their private morals; for Cromwell, though he continued to bear the semblance of enthusiasm after he had ceased to be an enthusiast, was always a religious man, and exemplary in all the domestic relations of life. The danger is, that we may be brought into a state which ultimately renders usurpation practicable, and disposes the great majority to submit to it willingly, or even gladly, for the sake of security, which must ever be their chief desire, as it is indeed the first object of civil society. Six years have elapsed since this writer thought the danger was ‘more apparent than real.’ During that interval great changes have taken place. We were then involved in a war, the longest, the most arduous, and ultimately *the most triumphant*, in which this country was

ever engaged. The tide of that war had not yet begun to turn in our favour; but although the Northern prophets predicted our defeat as inevitable, and declared that no man 'above the level of a drivelling courtier, or a feeble fanatic, could look at the contest without trembling every inch of him for the result;' and though Lord Wellington was vilified week after week by the foul-mouthed and ignorant journalists of an audacious faction, and his military talents held up to contempt, the events of the war at that time occupied the largest share of public attention; the impulse which its expenditure gave to manufactures and agriculture employed all hands in profitable activity, and every heart, which was not cankered, took a lively interest in the just and honourable cause of its country. Never was any war terminated more gloriously. From the mouth of the Tagus to the Garonne, the French were beaten inch by inch, and this career of military achievement was concluded by a victory of which it is no exaggeration to say that it has dimmed the splendour of all former fields, and that it will be remembered to the honour of the British name, as long as the name and the language of Britain shall endure. Peace had been the desire of all parties; the rulers and the sound part of the people looked to it as the object of the war; the factious clamoured for it, some from the mere principle of opposition, which implies the absence of any other principle; some, perhaps, from mistaken notions of humanity; and others, the self-styled friends of liberty, from an unnatural and traitorous attachment to the enemy of their coun-

try. .that enemy a murderer, a liberticide, a military despot, the most faithless, the most ruthless, the most prodigal of blood. Peace was at length effected, and as it ought to be; we won it in battle, and dictated the terms before the walls of Paris. This was a great and sudden change, and such a change, however desirable, however necessary, however beneficial at last, could not occur without much immediate inconvenience. It was not our military departments alone that were upon the war establishment, it was every branch of trade, and every kind of industry which was in any way connected with the war or influenced by it. The ordnance, for instance, employed the foundries, the gunsmiths, &c. &c.; these manufactories called upon the iron and brass works, and the furnaces kept the colliers in activity: thus it was in every part of the great political machine (the most complicated that ever existed), wheel within wheel, and when one was checked, the obstruction was felt through all. The whole annual war expenditure, to the amount of not less than forty millions, was at once withdrawn from circulation. But public expenditure is like the fountain-tree in the Indian paradise, that diffuses in fertilizing streams the vapours which it was created to collect and condense for the purpose of more beneficially returning and distributing them. A vacuum was inevitably produced by this sudden diminution; and the general dislocation which ensued may not unaptly be compared to the settling of the ice upon a wide sheet of water: explosions are heard and convulsions are seen on all sides; *in one place the ruptured ice is dislodged and*

lifted up, in another it sinks; sounds inexpressible by language, and wilder than the howlings of the wilderness, are emitted on every side, and thus the agitation continues for many hours till the whole has found its level, and nature resumes in silence its ordinary course.

A like effect must always be occasioned by the transition from war to peace, different in degree according as the war has been more or less protracted, and according to the scale on which it has been carried on. The transition from peace to war, so infinitely deplorable in other respects, brings with it less disturbance to the trading concerns of the community; those merchants whose dealings lie with the enemy are ruined, and credit receives a sudden shock, but the effects are partial and transitory; and an increased activity produces an increased circulation, and on all sides a demand for labour. In the present case, many causes concurred to aggravate the embarrassment which unavoidably accompanied the return of peace. As the country had never before been engaged in so momentous a contest, the expenditure had been greater than any country had ever before sustained, and the exertions of every kind greater than ever had been made before by any known nation. We were at one time cut off from foreign supplies of grain, and we had to feed large armies in an unproductive land. Extensive tracts of ground which had hitherto lain waste, were therefore, at great expense, but with the prospect of an adequate return, brought into cultivation in all parts of *Great Britain*; on a sudden the question came upon us at the return of peace, whether we were

to open the ports, that provisions of every kind might become as cheap as possible for the good of the whole community, or whether the general good would not be better consulted by shutting them, and keeping up the price of agricultural produce, to save the agricultural interest from ruin. Here was a question which at first sight appeared simple to every man, whether he saw the black or the white side of the shield, and as plain as his own direct personal interest; but it belongs to the metaphysics of political economy, and is in reality infinitely complicated and infinitely difficult. And this point was not mooted for the discussion of speculative men to be considered at leisure and dispassionately investigated in indifferent times; it was brought forward as a practical question of immediate vital importance, and debated with all the blind vehemence of private interest and popular prejudice. While the Corn Bill was in debate, the evil which the landholders deprecated was going on; and when the bill was passed, the proposed remedy which had been solicited so eagerly, and so violently opposed, produced no perceptible effect in either way. The dislocation had taken place in the natural course of things, and in the natural course things found their level, . . . but while they were finding it, great inconvenience arose, and widely extended distress. The agriculturists received a severe shock; the credit on which they used to rely was withdrawn, the markets fell, and ruin stared them in the face.

A set of miserable sciolists have maintained that *selfishness is the foundation of all our virtues as*

well as of all our vices, the ruling passion and prime impulse of the best men as well as of the worst;...there is therefore no other difference, upon this philosophy, between Epictetus and Tiberius, or Howard and Buonaparte, than that the one was a better calculator than the other. The opinion is not less execrable in morals than the principle itself is prejudicial when operating in ordinary life, whether as it regards individuals or communities. Heavy as the taxes were during the war, the rents of land were raised in more than an adequate proportion; a disposition too generally prevailed to exact from the tenant the largest possible sum. When the revulsion took place, the tenant was equally disposed to make his advantage of the landlord, and demanded a reduction not less exorbitant than the former advance. Each party, in its turn, endeavoured to profit to the uttermost by the unfavourable situation of the other,...the standard of equity was disregarded. High rents, which were as much the consequence of moral as of political causes, of error as of circumstances, have had their share in producing the existing distress; and those landlords who had screwed them to the highest point, are the persons who now experience the most inconvenience; where the advance had been moderate, the tenants were able to withstand a temporary pressure. The manufacturing and commercial interests owe much of their embarrassment, in like manner, to the avidity with which immediate gain has been pursued. The iron trade, for instance, is one which has suffered most. Some years ago this was so lucrative a branch of busi-

ness, that great capitalists, and even men of rank, crowded into it; men who were actually rich, and who in other times would have believed themselves so, could not be contented with the safe and regular returns which their property would have yielded in land or in the funds, but for the sake of enormous profit risked it, making themselves dependent upon chances and circumstances which they could neither foresee nor control. The gain being in proportion to the extent of the works while it was a lucrative concern, every man extended his works to the utmost; the possibility of producing more iron than might be required was not taken into the account; more therefore was produced than the country could consume, or than vent could be found for by exportation, and the trade was literally ruined by its prosperity, as overfeeding brings on disease in the animal body and death.

This, though the most striking instance which could be given, is not the only one; there are many articles with which the market both at home and abroad has been overstocked. For it must not be dissembled that both America and the continental nations have learnt to manufacture for themselves many things for which they had been accustomed to depend upon England. It is vain to imagine that improvements in machinery can for any length of time be confined to the country in which they are invented; and attempts to prevent manufacturers from emigrating by penal statutes, are not only oppressive, but inefficacious. Both men and machinery have found their way abroad; the manufacturing system has struck root

there ; we may perhaps find out new markets (certainly neither enterprise nor activity will be wanting in the search), but very many of the old ones are preoccupied, and must continue to be closed against us. There is no ultimate evil in this : on the contrary, it would be easy to shew that great ultimate good must arise from it, both to ourselves, and to the general interests of mankind, . . from which no nation can separate its own with impunity. But the unavoidable temporary consequences are disappointment and loss, with no inconsiderable degree of embarrassment and distress. While other countries have thus been learning to manufacture for themselves (and this, it should be remembered, they would have done in peace as well as in war, and probably sooner in peace), improvements have continually been made in our machinery at home, all tending to diminish the necessity for human labour, . . here also is a great prospective good, and a great present evil ; the good permanent, the evil only for a season. And still further to lessen the demand for labour, when sufficient employment could not be found for adults, children have been taken from their mother's side, from the sports which should have invigorated their bodies, and the schools which should have disciplined their mind and given them at least the rudiments of morality and religion, to be worked night and day amid the filth and stench of manufactories, to the sacrifice of enjoyment, health, morals, . . of all which distinguishes immortal man from brute animals, and all which renders life . . mere animal life . . desirable ! These *coinciding* causes have thrown upon the public a

vast number of persons, able and willing to work, but unable to obtain occupation, and this at a time when the landed interest on whom they are thrown are least able to support the burthen. And here it may be asked whether any real diminution of the public expenditure has been effected by disbanding the ten thousand soldiers whom government more wisely wished to have retained in the service? The great and urgent evil being that so many hands are turned out of employ, it is manifest that none of these men can find employment without standing in the place of others who want it, . . . in other words, that the whole ten thousand must be thrown upon the country *totidem numeris*, though not *totidem personis*; and if anything be saved by transferring them from the army estimates to the poor-rates, the paltry parsimony is more than counterbalanced by other consequential and obvious evils.

Things were not in this state when M. Simond thought that the danger of political convulsion in this country was more apparent than real. Our agriculture was then in the highest degree flourishing, the revenue every year more productive than the last; trade, though fluctuating in its different branches, pre-eminently prosperous on the whole: the proprietors of lands, in the observer's own words. . . 'out of the vortex and safe at anchor;' and the monied men eager 'to buy land, being a 'safe property and a permanent revenue, and because there was an inundation of wealth in the 'country.' Then also events of the utmost magnitude and moment were passing upon the great political stage; every man was more or less inte-

rested in the tremendous tragedy of war, and the columns of the factious journalists, our Brissots and Marats, Girondistes and Jacobines, . . Whigs, Ultra-Whigs, and downright Anarchists, were in great part occupied with the detail of passing events, . . so that, though they drugged every thing with poison, the venom itself was diluted, and there was less of it. Yet even then it was the first feeling of this judicious observer, that a spark might set the whole machine in a blaze; and when more knowledge of the country and of the people had lessened the force of his first impressions, and made him believe, as he hoped, that a state of things productive of such infinite good was in no danger of being subverted, he still perceived that no other government in Europe could long withstand the attacks to which this is constantly exposed; that the abuse of the press is the curse of English liberty, and that the press has in it a decomposing as well as a vivifying principle. . . Let us beware how we suffer the decomposing one to predominate! It has already been at work too successfully and too long. The outrages of the Luddites. . in consequence of which the manufacturers are removing from Nottingham, and the next generation may perhaps see grass growing in the streets of that now populous city. . were not occasioned by any grievances real or imaginary, nor by any actual distress; they have proceeded from a spirit of insubordination, created, fostered, and inflamed by the periodical press. The agricultural riots were not occasioned by distress, . . the unhappy culprits who suffered for them under the sentence of the law were men of substance,

It was not 'Poverty and his cousin Necessity who brought them to those doings,' and to that deplorable end;... it was the spirit of factious discontent, excited for the purposes of revolution by demagogue orators, and demagogue journalists, who now do not even affect to conceal the object at which they aim. If one man instigates another to commit murder, the instigator, as well as the instrument, is punished: here the instruments alone have suffered, and the greater criminals proceed with unabated or even increasing zeal in their endeavours to provoke fresh excesses, and hurry on fresh victims to destruction, without compunction for the past, and regardless by what means they may accomplish the consummation which they seek.

This temper has been unequivocally shewn upon the present distress among the labouring and manufacturing classes. Such numerous bodies of men having been thrown out of employ, every good man perceived the necessity of affording them temporary relief, and the propriety of alleviating the poor-rates by voluntary aid, till alternative measures of permanent policy could be devised and brought into action for gradually removing a burthen that was becoming intolerable. It was as obviously expedient that this should be done, as that the surgeon should apply a tourniquet to the shattered limb till he can amputate it. And to this course common humanity and common sense instantly pointed. British feeling and British generosity have never been appealed to in vain. But in what manner has this appeal been answered by the Ultra-Whigs and the Radical Re-

formers, . . the knife and cautery men? It is the old story of the needy Knife-Grinder and the Friend of Humanity, in which the Rights of Man are prescribed, and the Sixpence refused. What was there feigned in playful satire has been the exact course pursued by our demagogues, in the avowed hope that unrelieved distress may exasperate the people against the government, and with the deliberate intention of inflaming the ignorant multitude, and setting them on.

There was, according to our judgement, a great error committed by the distinguished and excellent persons in whom the subscription originated. The names and the donations of the dignitaries of our church were all that was required from them; their personal appearance at a public meeting, and that meeting too in a tavern, was inconsistent with their profession and their rank. When it is necessary for them to recommend charity by precept as well as example, it should be by their pastoral charges in their professional character, not by exposing themselves as individuals to a verbal contest with faction and vulgarity. These observations apply in part also to the Royal Personages who came forward upon the same occasion, with the same excellent motives, but, as it appears to us, with similar imprudence. Parliament is the place where their opinions may be delivered with dignity and effect. Public meetings should be left to those whose brazen fronts and brazen voices qualify them for such theatres: and were they left wholly to the orators of Palace Yard and the *Common Hall*, the spokesmen would not long be able to impose upon their auditors, credulous as

such auditors are; they would quarrel among themselves, each striving to be cock of the dunghill; the coarsest appetite would at length be palled by the offal with which these men diet it; and even if the public, growing weary of the same endless declamation, should not discover the folly of some, the profligacy of others, and the misrepresentations and falsehoods of all, there would be no danger of their mistaking the character of such meetings, or imputing to them an undue importance. But when illiterate men, listening to their weekly allowance of politics, hear that Princes and Primates, the highest characters and the most sacred ones of the realm, have presented themselves at a tavern, to be contradicted, browbeaten, and hooted down by men some of whose names they had never heard before, and others who were better known for their misconduct than for any good deserts; when this extraordinary account. . . prejudicial enough in the simple truth, is rendered still more so by the malicious manner in which the whole proceedings are represented to the advantage of the demagogues, and by the revolutionary seasoning with which it is served up, . . . is it not likely that their respect for what ought most to be respected should be sensibly diminished, and that they should suppose the revolution which is to render all ranks equal by pulling down the great, and elevating the low, has actually commenced?

A provincial paper is now lying before us in which it is affirmed that a systematic revolution has been effected by the politics of Mr. Pitt. The liberties of the country having been overturned, *and the whole wealth of the nation absorbed by*

taxation, ' what the people are instigated by their sufferings to do afterwards,' the incendiary says, ' is not a Revolution ; it is the just and natural effort of men to recover the possession of prosperity for themselves and their posterity, . . it is the uncontrollable exertion of a people striving to regain their rights, to exist as men, and to act as a community. The scheme of public subscription,' he says, ' is a specious mode of delusion, which the honest and independent poor even in the midst of their want justly regard as an insult. The alleviation of their miseries can proceed only from the restoration of their rights as men : patient endurance can never be the fate of this realm, . . we will not be still and die quietly while a drop of vitality remains.' This is a chance specimen of the language which is at this time preached at public meetings, and has long been promulgated by the provincial as well as the London press. The orators and journalists of this active and noisy faction tell the poor that the subscription which would alleviate their immediate necessities is a mockery and an insult ; and instead of giving them bread, or devising means for employing them in public works, they advise them to cry out for such measures and pursue such conduct as lead immediately to popular revolution, . . of all curses the greatest which the Almighty in his anger could inflict upon this nation. One orator exhorts the people to refuse payment of the taxes ; another recommends that the national debt should be extinguished by a vote of parliament, . . parliament of course being previously reformed, so that it may consist of repre-

sentatives who will not scruple at passing such a vote; a third advises that the tithes be sold and the produce funded; a fourth demands universal suffrage; . . and some of these united politicians engage never to cease their exertions till they shall have obtained what they call speedy, radical and effectual reform; . . patient endurance, they tell us, shall not be their fate, they will not be still, their cry shall be too general to be mistaken and too powerful to be resisted. Were there any limits to human folly and human wickedness, it would be incredible that there should be men erroneous enough, and criminal enough. . . with the example of France before their eyes (fresh and reeking as those horrors are!) to hold forth language like this, and exert themselves zealously and perseveringly to convince the mob that the physical force is in their hands, and that it is their own fault if they submit longer to be governed by the educated and intellectual part of their countrymen. Have these persons ever asked themselves what would be the consequence of the measures which they advise? . . if universal suffrage were established, whether it would afford universal employment for the quiet and industrious part of the people as surely as it would for the worthless, the turbulent, the mischievous, and the wicked? . . if the church property were seized, whether the title-deeds of the landholder would long be considered as giving him an indefeasible right to his estates? . . if the national debt were extinguished, whether the public would be benefited by the ruin of the funded proprietors, that is, whether the body would *derive advantage* from having one of the limbs *pa-*

ralysed? and whether national prosperity be the natural and necessary consequence of national bankruptcy, the breach of national faith and the loss of national character? . . finally, if the people, according to the advice of one of these popular representatives, were to refuse payment of the taxes. .

WHAT THEN? Let these men suppose themselves successful in their projects, and following in imagination the career of their ambition, ask themselves this question at every step, . . **WHAT THEN?** If they should succeed in instigating the people to resistance, to rebellion, to civil war, to revolution, **WHAT THEN?** What might be the consequences to this great. . this glorious. . this venerable country, He alone can tell without whose inscrutable will no calamity can befall us; but the consequences to themselves may be foretold with perfect certainty, . . guilt, insecurity, fear, misery, ruin, unavailing repentance, violent death, and infamy everlasting. It was remarked by one of the numerous French demagogues who fell into the pit which they had digged, that Revolutions were like Saturn and devoured their own children. ‘Should there be a Revolution in the other world,’ said Danton to one of his friends, when they were on their way to the guillotine, . . ‘take my advice ‘and have nothing to do with it!’ Danton asked pardon of God and man for having instituted the Revolutionary Tribunal: it was only on the first anniversary of its institution that he was carried before it to receive sentence himself, . . so short is the reign of a Revolutionist!

Perhaps if M. Simond had seen England under *its present aspect*, he might have thought that the

danger was real as well as apparent. But there is a *vis conservatrix* in the state, and the preventive means which exist are easy and effectual. It is only necessary to enforce the laws and to stop the progress of sedition by such punishment as shall prevent a repetition of the offence, . . . any other is absurdly inappropriate. Let the sheriffs and magistrates refuse to call such meetings as manifestly tend, and certainly are intended, to agitate the people. Let the civil power be strengthened wherever it is needful, by swearing in as constables every man who is a known friend to good order; mobs would then be so speedily suppressed that the turbulent and misguided would not venture to invade the property of their neighbours and disturb the peace of the country. Arm the sound part of the people thus with the law, . . . let them fully understand the power with which it invests them, and that, if they will stand by the law, the law will stand by them. Let it but be made known that '*England expects every man to do his duty,*' and the sense of duty will be found as strong in men who are thus armed and called upon, as it proved at Trafalgar and at Waterloo. It is needless to observe how desirable it is, on every account, that the civil power should be preferably employed wherever it is possible, . . . and there are many cases where it may be effectually employed in which military force could be of no avail. In the counties where the Luddites continue their combinations, it is the custom that, before any frames are broken, one of the committee waits on the owner of the machinery, ordering him to desist from using it, and in case of refusal threatening

him with the destruction of his property; . . the men who carry this threat are suffered quietly to depart; the members of their committees are known, and the public houses where they hold their sittings. Does the law sleep, that these things are carried on in open day? Every man whose property is in danger should be sworn in as a constable, and every man also whom he should recommend as trustworthy: when the well disposed are thus combined under the law, for the protection of peace and order, we shall cease to hear of depredations which have too long disgraced the country. And here we cannot refrain from noticing the conduct of those magistrates in the Eastern counties, who capitulated with the agricultural rioters, and not only acceded to the demands of a mob, but even consented to deliver up men who had been apprehended in the act of rioting, and were then in custody. This was as flagrant a breach of duty as it would be in an officer to desert his post, or turn his back upon the enemy in the hour of battle. The nation has as much right to look for firmness from its magistrates as from its soldiers and its sailors.

M. Simond concludes his journal with a parallel between the French and English nations, drawn with moderation, discernment, and in the spirit of good will towards both. We cannot conclude more appropriately than by pursuing the parallel, and applying it to the state of England at this time, and that of France at the commencement of the Revolution. We have our men of rank, like *the Duc de Biron*, who act from error rather than *ill-design*, . . but who would do well to remember that

the last words which he uttered upon the scaffold, were, 'I have been false to my King, my Order, 'and my God!' We have those who unite in themselves wealth, fashion and talent, the gifts of fortune and of nature, like Herault Sechelles and St. Just,.. but who like them are corrupted by evil principles and evil desires; and who, if they were once 'in blood,' would find 'that sin must pluck on sin;' we have our literatuli and philosophists like the Girondistes;.. our lawyers like Barnave, only without his eloquence;.. our Rabauts de St. Etienne who would fain exchange the dissenting pulpit for the tribune;.. our professors of humanity like Robespierre who wrote a treatise against the punishment of death; our journalists like Camille Desmoulins and Hebert; our Petions and Santerres; and if the season for indulging such dispositions were arrived, our Marats, Billauds and Carriers would not be wanting. But on the other hand we have a moral and religious people sensible of the blessings which they possess; a gentry who will stand by the law and exert themselves to maintain it; a loyal army and navy; a government which has raised us to the highest pitch of glory; and a constitution which is the admiration and envy of the whole civilized world, which has been transmitted to us by our fathers, and which we will transmit to our children.. so help us God!



ESSAY VII.

ON

THE STATE OF PUBLIC OPINION

AND

THE POLITICAL REFORMERS.

1816.

ESSAY VII.

ON THE STATE OF PUBLIC OPINION AND THE POLITICAL REFORMERS.

IF the opinions of profligate and of mistaken men may be thought to reflect disgrace upon the nation, of which they constitute a part, it might verily be said that England was never so much disgraced as at this time. Never before had the country been engaged in so long or so arduous a struggle; never had any country, in ancient or in modern times, made such great and persevering exertions; never had any country displayed more perfect magnanimity, and scarcely ever had any contest been terminated with such consummate and transcendent glory:..this at least is universally acknowledged;..it is confessed as much by the rage and astonishment of the ferocious revolutionist, and the ill-disguised regret of a party whom the events of the war have stultified as well as soured, as by the gratitude and admiration of all true Britons, and of the wise and the good throughout the civilized world. Yet at this time, when the plans of government have been successful beyond all former example, ..when the object

of a twenty years' war. . the legitimate object of a just and necessary war, . has been attained, and England, enjoying the peace which she has thus bravely won, should be left at leisure to pursue with undistracted attention those measures, which, by mitigating present evils and preventing crimes in future, may, as far as human means can be effectual, provide for an increasing and stable prosperity; . at this time a cry of discontent is gone forth, the apostles of anarchy take advantage of a temporary and partial distress, and by imposing upon the ignorance of the multitude, flattering their errors and inflaming their passions, are exciting them to sedition and rebellion.

During the great struggle between Charles I. and his parliament, the people required an appearance at least of devotion and morality in their leaders; no man could obtain their confidence unless he observed the decencies of life, and conformed in his outward deportment to the laws of God and man. There was much hypocrisy among them as well as much fanaticism, but the great body of the nation were sincerely religious, and strict in the performance of their ordinary duties; and to this cause, more than to any other, is it owing that no civil war was ever carried on with so few excesses and so little cruelty, so that the conduct of the struggle was as honourable to the nation as the ultimate consequences have been beneficial. It is a melancholy, and in some respects an alarming thing, to observe the contrast at the present crisis, when the populace look for no other qualification in their heroes than effrontery and a voluble tongue. Easily deluded

they have always been; but evil-minded and insidious men, who in former times endeavoured to deceive the moral feelings of the multitude, have now laboured more wickedly and more successfully in corrupting them. Their favourite shall have a plenary dispensation for as many vices as he can afford to entertain, and as many crimes as he may venture to commit; so he will but harangue against the government and insult the Prince Regent, they wink at the breach of a commandment, and are ready, as far as their sovereignty extends, to annul the verdict of a jury. Among them sedition stands in the place of charity and covereth a multitude of sins.

Were it not that the present state of popular knowledge is a necessary part of the process of society, a stage through which it must pass in its progress toward something better, it might reasonably be questioned whether the misinformation of these times be not worse than the ignorance of former ages. For a people who are ignorant and know themselves to be so, will often judge rightly when they are called upon to think at all, acting from common sense, and the unperverted instinct of equity. But there is a kind of half knowledge which seems to disable men even from forming a just opinion of the facts before them, . . . a sort of squint in the understanding which prevents it from seeing straightforward, and by which all objects are distorted. Men in this state soon begin to confound the distinctions between right and wrong; farewell then to simplicity of heart, and with it farewell to rectitude of judgement! *The demonstrations of geometry indeed retain*

their force with them, for they are gross and tangible: but to all moral propositions, to all finer truths they are insensible; the part of their nature which should correspond with these is stricken with dead palsy. Give men a smattering of law, and they become litigious; give them a smattering of physic, and they become hypochondriacs or quacks, disordering themselves by the strength of imagination, or poisoning others in the presumptuousness of conceited ignorance. But of all men, the smatterer in philosophy is the most intolerable and the most dangerous; he begins by unlearning his Creed and his Commandments; and in the process of eradicating what it is the business of all sound education to implant, his duty to God is discarded first, and his duty to his neighbour presently afterwards. As long as he confines himself to private practice the mischief does not extend beyond his private circle; there indeed it shews itself; . . . his neighbour's wife may be in some danger, and his neighbour's property also, if the distinctions between *meum* and *tuum* should be practically inconvenient to the man of free opinions. But when he commences professor of moral and political philosophy for the benefit of the public, the fables of old credulity are then verified; his very breath becomes venomous, and every page which he sends abroad carries with it poison to the unsuspecting reader.

It has been shewn, in a former essay, how men of this description are acting upon the public, and in what manner a large part of the people have been prepared for the virus with which they inoculate them. The dangers arising from

such a state of things are now fully apparent; and the designs of the incendiaries, which have for some years been proclaimed so plainly, that they ought, long ere this, to have been prevented, are now manifested by overt acts. On this point, therefore, it cannot be necessary to enlarge. But there is a class of political reformers who profess, according to Horne Tooke's expression, that they mean to *stop at Brentford*; and as these gentlemen, as far as they go, use the same arguments by which their more eager allies are stimulated to go the whole way and push forward for the Bank and the Tower, it may not be a useless task to detect their fallacies and expose their falsehood.

It is boldly asserted that the late war was undertaken and carried on against the wishes of the people, and in support of despotic governments against the liberties of mankind; that it was the cause of the existing distress, being itself a consequence of the corrupt state of the representation; and that the remedy for all our evils is a Reform in Parliament. The first of these assertions is in direct opposition to the truth. The second imputes the evil to a cause in itself inevitable, and which has only incidentally and partially operated in producing it. The third recommends a remedy which could no more mitigate the disease, than the demolition of Tenterden Steeple could remove Goodwin Sands.

If ever there was a war begun and carried to its close with the hearty concurrence of the nation, it was the late war with France. We appeal to every person who remembers the beginning of the

French Revolution, whether, if the question of peace or war had been referred to the people of England and decided by universal suffrage, Mr. Pitt would have found one dissentient voice in a thousand? That question completely broke up an opposition, which, till then, had nearly equi-poised the weight of the ministry; the few who remained with Mr. Fox sunk at once from the rank and character of a party to that of a faction as feeble as they were unpopular;...so feeble, indeed, and so utterly insignificant in the scale, that they took the memorable step of seceding from Parliament. The principle of loyalty was triumphant even to intolerance; in most parts of England the appellations of republican and jacobin were sufficient to mark a man for public odium, perhaps for personal danger, persecution and ruin. The riots at Birmingham, as they proved of what excesses an infuriated rabble are capable, prove also beyond all possibility of confutation what were the politics of the multitude at that time. And as is always the case in seasons of violent political feeling, men who were brought to trial for sedition, were in some instances convicted upon evidence scandalously insufficient, and condemned not for their actions, but for their opinions. The prosecutions were the act of government, but the convictions were the work of the people. Government was supported and even impelled by public opinion; and there is perhaps no instance in history wherein a nation has been more unanimous than the British nation in the great and decisive measure of declaring war against the French republic.

The records of parliament, the addresses and associations are unanswerable proofs of this. None but they who are entirely unacquainted with the transactions of those times can believe that the war was undertaken against the opinion of the people; and the writers and orators who assert it, make the impudent assertion either in utter ignorance or in utter contempt of truth.

Thus much concerning the commencement of hostilities, at which time, if the government of England had been a pure democracy, and the people had given their votes by themselves instead of their representatives, the majority in favour of that measure would have been even more apparent than it was. As for the justice of the war, had it been undertaken for no other purpose than that of weakening France, by dismembering it, England would have been justified by the conduct of France in the struggle with America. But it rests upon better ground. It has been asserted, with reference to this subject, that one nation has no right to interfere with the internal arrangements of another; and this assertion is to this day repeated, as if it were an axiom in political morality. But as M. de Puisaye, who demolishes the arguments built upon this sandy foundation, has well observed, . . . it is with the independence of nations as with the liberty of individuals, they have a right to do every thing which involves no wrong to others. So long as my neighbour demeans himself conformably to the laws, his conduct is no concern of mine: but if he convert his house into a brothel, or commence a manufactory there which should poison my family with its unwholesome

stench, I prosecute him for a nuisance. If he should think proper to take an air-bath in the street before my windows, his natural liberty would be restrained by the wholesome discipline of Bedlam or of the beadle; and if he were to set his house on fire, the services of the finisher of the law would be required. Just such are the relations of one country to another. With the internal arrangements of any neighbouring people we have nothing to do, as long as their arrangements have nothing to do with us. Should they be seized with madness, bite one another, and turn the whole land into one miserable Bedlam, God restore them to their senses!.. we cannot. But if this Bedlam breaks loose, and its inhabitants insist upon biting us, there is no alternative but that of resorting to those measures which unhappily are the only substitute for law between nations when they differ; wars, as Lord Bacon says, being ‘suits of appeal to the tribunal of God’s justice, when there is none on earth to decide the cause.’ That the French were in a state of madness, is what all Frenchmen of every party have confessed since they came to their senses after the reign of terror, or of cowardice, as one of their own countrymen has more properly called it: and that they invited other nations to follow their example by a decree, promising assistance to any people who should rise to vindicate the rights of men, can be no matter of dispute, for the fact is recorded in history, to the truth of which half the existing generation are witnesses.

There may be some who question the policy of the war, however just the motives for which it

was commenced, and there can be few who would commend the manner in which it was conducted; but only those persons who set truth at defiance and are incapable of shame will assert that it was unpopular. It was a war by acclamation, in which the people went with the government heart and hand. In its progress every conceivable error was committed; so that if men had looked to the conduct of the allies, their discordant views and their deplorable counsels, they might, without hesitation, have pronounced the contest hopeless, had they not perceived on the other hand a constant and reasonable cause for hope in the condition of France itself. For in the course of the French revolution one excess succeeded another, each more extravagant than that which went before it; follies were generated by follies, crimes begot crimes, and horrors were produced by the monstrous intermixture of both, such as former times had never seen, not in the most barbarous countries, not in the fiercest ages of superstition, not under the most execrable tyrannies. If depletion be a remedy for raging madness, it might have been thought that blood enough was let by their own executioners to have brought back this frantic nation to its senses. It was impossible that so unnatural a state should be permanent, . . . certain that the great body of the people must desire rest and security above all other things, . . . more than probable that when they were wearied with sufferings and with changes, they would look to a restoration of the exiled family as the easiest and surest means of putting an end to them. Many occasions offered *in which this object might have been effected had*

there been less treachery and less imbecility in the councils of the emigrant princes, and more wisdom and more decision in the allied cabinets. These opportunities were lost; and when, in the tenth year of the war, the spirit of Jacobinism was burnt out in France, and in the regular progress of revolutions a military government had been established upon the wreck of principles and institutions, the peace of Amiens was made.

As the Anti-Jacobine war had been eminently popular at its commencement, so was the peace of Amiens made in entire concurrence with the general wishes of the people. Not that the great majority believed it would be permanent, but because they thought it on every account proper that the experiment should be made. The minority which followed Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham in condemning it, was even smaller than that which had sided with Mr. Fox in reprobating the war: but the weight of their arguments was felt, and they manifested a sensibility for the honour of the country, and a warmth for its interests which sunk deep in the public mind. The danger from Jacobinism seemed to be gone by; there remained no other vestige of it in France than the wreck which it had brought about: the French nation was returning to its old fondness for tinsel and gold chains; the Eternal Republic had already past from the despotism of many to the despotism of one; it was evident that the First Consul might exchange his mongrel title whenever he thought fit for that of *Grand Monarque*, Emperor, or Arch-emperor, if it liked him better; and there was good reason for supposing, or rather no rea-

son to doubt, that his inclinations were taking that course. There was therefore nothing to apprehend from France on the score of political contagion; the practical lectures which had been read upon Jacobinism in that country might have been thought sufficient to undeceive mankind till the very end of time. But a new danger had grown out of the war to which that principle had given rise. What was the position in which France was left at its termination? What were the views of the French government, and what was the personal character of the individual by whose sole will it was directed?

The political system of Europe had been fearfully dislocated by the war. France had accomplished that which during a century and half it had been the great object of English policy to prevent. She had obtained possession of the Netherlands, extended her frontier to the Rhine, and held Holland on one side and Italy on the other, in actual dependance. Switzerland also, . . unoffending and happy Switzerland, the asylum of literature, liberty and peace, which during three centuries of contention had been respected as the sacred territory of Christendom, . . Switzerland also had been added, by an act of atrocious aggression, to the dependencies of France. All or more than all that Louis XIV. attempted had been effected. Was it likely, was it in the nature of things that France should stop here? Ambition is one of those passions which are stimulated, not satiated by indulgence. And this nation was habitually ambitious, habitually fond of war, politic in council, acting patiently and perseveringly amid all

internal changes upon one system of aggrandizement, and pursuing its purposes, even in the best ages of its history, equally without faith and without remorse. The French were now surrounded with their trophies and intoxicated with their triumphs; had there been no other cause, their national character and the known policy which had so long actuated all their governments, must have made reflecting persons doubt the continuance of a peace concluded under such circumstances with such a people. But to increase these apprehensions France possessed a portentous military force, the greatest which had ever been seen in the civilized world, perfectly organized, in the highest state of discipline, and under generals whose talents were believed to be incomparable, and who were at the very height of military renown. 'If the clouds be full of rain,' says Solomon, 'they empty themselves upon the earth.' War, to which the French, more than any other people, had always been inclined, had become the national passion, the preferable, or rather the only road to wealth, honour and distinction. It omens ill for the tranquillity of nations when Mars is Lord of the Ascendant. And there no longer existed upon the continent any counterpoise to the power of this restless, politic and elated people. Austria had come out of the struggle with loss of territory, diminished reputation, and exhausted resources. But the contest which had impoverished Austria and loaded England with an enormous debt, had been to France a source of revenue as well as power; for the French, beginning with bank-

ruptcy at home, had proceeded abroad upon the maxim of Machiavelli, that men and arms will find money and provide for themselves. And as the officers and soldiers had been trained in the revolution, the principles which they had learnt in that ferocious school might render them as dangerous at home to the adventurer for monarchy as they would be powerful instruments for carrying into effect his wider plans of foreign usurpation. It was to be apprehended then, that both from motives of political and personal prudence the First Consul would employ these turbulent spirits in their vocation. Louis XVI., the most benevolent, the most truly religious, the most conscientious of the Bourbon kings, engaged in hostilities against this country for no other reason than that the contest in America offered an opportunity for aggrandizing France by weakening England. Could we suppose that the First Consul would be more scrupulous, and let pass any occasion of gratifying the old enmity of France, and avenging himself upon the only people by whom he had ever been baffled in his career? Was he so just, so pious, so humane, that we might rely upon his faithful observance of treaties, and his love of peace?

Sir William Temple, a man of great sagacity and much political experience, observes that he 'never could find a better way of judging the resolutions of a state, than by the personal temper and understanding, or passions and humours of the princes or chief ministers that were for the time at the head of affairs.' This observation holds good even in free governments: with how

much greater force must it apply to a country where every thing is decided by the will and pleasure of an individual! In such a country the course of its politics can be inferred solely from the character of that individual. How far then had the character of Buonaparte been developed at this time?

The English are a generous people. However much they might regret the course of adverse fortune in which they had been engaged, they did not regard the First Consul with any invidious feeling because he had been their successful enemy. They had rendered full justice to Washington under more humiliating circumstances: even those persons who disapproved in principle the cause in which he triumphed, regarded that excellent man with admiration and reverence. There were causes also which might make men of opposite parties agree in the wish that Buonaparte should not be found wanting in the scale; so that when they weighed him in their own judgement, there was a bias given, perhaps unconsciously, to the balance in his favour. The disciples of the Revolution reconciled themselves to the disappointment of their republican hopes, by considering that the First Consul was a child of the Revolution, . . . the Jupiter of that Saturn which had devoured its elder children; . . . that he prevented the restoration of the Bourbons, governed in the name, at least, of the people, and still talked of liberty and philosophy. The enemies of the Revolution saw more accurately that Buonaparte had destroyed republicanism in France; and as they *had now given up the Bourbons, whose cause indeed they had never supported either wisely or*

consistently, it would be some consolation for the failure of their plans, if the man with whom they had treated should prove worthy of the rank in which they had recognized him as legitimately established. But with what aspects had this Lucifer of the age risen above the horizon? His career had been not more remarkable for boldness in enterprize than for audacity in crimes. His conduct in Italy had been alike distinguished by perfidy, rapacity, insolent usurpation, and cold, calculating, systematic inhumanity. There he began that system of military murder which before his time was unknown in civilized Europe. Three* of the most honourable inhabitants of Verona were condemned by one of his military tribunals, and executed in sight of the whole city, because their countrymen had been provoked to resist the intolerable exactions and outrages of the French. One of these victims was in his hands upon the faith of a treaty, another as an ambassador, and the third had received a solemn assurance of security. So far from having acted as enemies towards the French, one of them had saved Frenchmen during the insurrection, and another had many times removed their wounded soldiers from the field, when their brutal comrades, and more brutal generals, had left them there to perish. With the same contempt of the

* The names of these victims were Emili, Verita, and Malenza.—A monument should be erected to them on the spot where they suffered. For the history of these transactions, and a view of Buonaparte's character as it was developed during his first Italian war, the reader is referred to an Account of the Fall of Venice, translated from the Italian by Mr. Hinckley. It is to be regretted that so interesting a story should be so ill told.

law of nations, the usages of war, and the common feelings of humanity, Buonaparte put the municipal officers of Pavia to death. Military executions were inflicted without remorse upon the slightest pretext; and giving full scope to the brutal passions and corrupted principles of his soldiers, he suffered them to perpetrate every kind of havock, cruelty, and abomination.

Such had been Buonaparte's conduct in Italy. His Egyptian expedition was characterized by deeper horrors. The massacre at Jaffa, and the poisoning of his own wounded men have frequently been denied, and there have been authors who with felicitous ingenuity have attempted upon these charges to prove a negative in his behalf. Both charges are now established beyond all possibility of further denial, by the avowal of the criminal himself, and by the full testimony of eye-witnesses to the massacres, and of men who were in the camp. These had been his actions before the peace of Amiens; they proved him to be alike destitute of truth, honour, religion, and humanity. 'That which is crooked cannot be made straight.' Was peace likely to be durable when it depended upon this man's faith? Was it reasonable to suppose that we should gather olives from this upas tree?

During the short continuance of peace, Buonaparte annexed Piedmont to France; he made himself president of the Italian republic; he formed a new constitution for Switzerland, and marched an overpowering force into that country to establish it. The nominal independence of *Holland* was as little respected; troops were kept

there to hold it in subjection, and exact such loans as he thought proper to demand. When England remonstrated against these acts of aggrandizement, and declared her intention of retaining Malta as some counterpoise, inadequate as it was, he replied that England had nothing to do with any arrangements of France; she was *hors du continent*, . . . excluded from continental affairs; and so she must remain, for this was now to be the first principle of European policy. The relations between France and England were the Treaty of Amiens, the whole Treaty of Amiens, and nothing but the Treaty of Amiens; and as for her retaining Malta, he said, he would rather see her in possession of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine.

Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futuræ,

he has lived to see her in possession of both.

Little dreaming of such an issue, he threatened us with immediate invasion, and the vengeance which five hundred thousand men were ready to inflict. As a mercantile power, supposing, he said, that those words (*puissance marchande*) were ever again to be allied, England was prosperous, but those Englishmen who knew that a nation never can lose its glory with impunity, had good reason to perceive nothing but disasters before them. He required the British government to send the members of the Bourbon family, and all such emigrants as wore their orders, out of the country; and to put a stop to the unbecoming and seditious publications with which the newspapers and other works printed in * England

* Among the improvements which the French government at that time was obliging enough to suggest in our constitution, one was, that

were filled. The answer of the British government to this latter demand is well worthy of being held in remembrance, for the honour of those ministers by whom it was dictated, and the instruction of those simple men who are taught to believe that the war against Buonaparte was a war against liberty: 'His Majesty cannot and never will, in consequence of any representation, or any menace from a foreign power, make any concession which can be in the smallest degree dangerous to the liberty of the press, as secured by the constitution of this country.' The laws, they stated, were as open to the French government as to themselves. They neither had, nor wanted, any other protection than what those laws afforded; and never would they consent to remodel them, or change their constitution, to gratify the wishes of any foreign power. His Majesty, it was added, expected that the French government would not interfere in the manner in which the government of his dominions was conducted, or call for any change in those laws with which his people were perfectly satisfied... Is it to be imputed to an entire ignorance of the state of England, or to an insolent belief that every thing must be subservient to his pleasure, that after this decisive reply Buonaparte returned to the subject, and formally proposed that 'means should be adopted to prevent in future any mention being made, either in official discussions, or in all ministers, upon going out of office, should be disqualified for sitting in parliament during the next seven years: another proposed that any member of parliament who should insult an allied power (or, in other words should express an unfavourable opinion of the designs of Buonaparte) should be debarred from speaking for two years.

‘polemical writings, in England, of what was passing in France; as in like manner in the French official discussions and polemical writings, no mention whatever should be made of what was passing in England?’ England desired no such reciprocity. There was no part of her history, no part of her conduct, no part of her intentions, which required concealment. Was she to put out her eyes, because Buonaparte wished to keep France in darkness?

It is not unseasonable to recall these facts to remembrance, as also the appointment of military spies in our seaports, under the character of commercial agents; Sebastiani’s report upon Egypt, indicating clearly a design of repeating the attempt upon that country; the declaration of Buonaparte that Egypt sooner or later must belong to France, either by an arrangement with the Porte, or by a partition of the Turkish empire; and finally the memorable assertion that England was not able to contend single-handed with France. Were we indeed so fallen, . . . so changed? Were we actually, according to the new public law which was now enunciated, excluded from all concern in the affairs of the continent? Had we lost not only our rank, but even our place, among the powers of Europe; and were we to be thankful for the moderation which permitted us still to exist as a mercantile community? If so, it behoved us to demolish Blenheim, to prohibit all books of English history, and teach the whole rising generation the use of French as their common speech, that they might be prepared for the *decree which should include Great Britain among*

the dependent provinces of France, and London among the 'good cities' of the Great Empire! The alternative proposed to us was war, or such submission as, if it were not necessitated by utter helplessness, could be imputed only to cowardice or fatuity; a submission which would have given Buonaparte time to create a navy, and make invasion practicable; which would have delayed the war for no longer a time than suited his convenience,...that is,...till that navy should have been completed, and which would have rendered the war infinitely more formidable when the hour was come. Nor would the interval have been peace*; it could only have been an armed truce; a state of feverish suspicion, harassed insecurity, and exhausting vigilance. This the people understood; they had been desirous that the experiment of peace should be tried; they saw plainly that the experiment had failed; that no danger could be so great and certain as that of continuing on such terms with such an enemy: when, therefore, the government, in perfect accordance with the sound judgement, the common sense, and the honest honourable feelings of the nation, determined upon renewing hostilities, the news was welcomed in the city of London with huzzas.

There were writers and speakers at the time

* 'War,' says Hobbes, 'consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but is a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known; and therefore the notion of *time* is to be considered in the nature of war, as it is in the nature of weather. For as the nature of good weather lyeth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together, so the nature of war consisteth not in actual fighting, but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.'

who affected to regard this manifestation of public opinion with horror, and represented it as proceeding from a brutal insensibility to the evils of war, or a more brutal delight in anticipating its gains. They libelled their countrymen thus because party-feeling made them incapable of understanding the right English spirit which looked danger in the face, and thus cheerfully defied it in reliance upon God and a good cause. But had the city statesmen forgotten this memorable and notorious fact when they *resolved* that the war had been undertaken in opposition to the wishes of the people? We have heard of the omnipotence of Parliament, but the town and country petitioners in their omnipotence attempt to go beyond it; they enact for the past as well as the future, and vote unanimous resolutions which are to alter what *has been*. There is a proverb which says that great wits have short memories, and the old balsam of memory should be prescribed for such state-mongers, unless a decoction of the herbs honesty and rue might be deemed a more appropriate medicine, the organ of veracity being the seat of the disease. A French historian was one day relating some circumstances which had recently occurred, when a person, better informed of the transaction, told him that the facts were not as he represented them: '*Ah, Monsieur!*' he replied, '*tant pis pour les faits,*' so much the worse for the facts! It was honestly said, . . . and is characteristic of French historians: but when men either in public or private assert things in opposition to the truth, and their assertions are disproved, the common

consent of mankind has determined that it is so much the worse for the assertors: a loss of character and of credit is incurred; they are convicted either of ignorance, or of wilful misrepresentation, and in such cases ignorance is as poor a plea in morals and in politics, as in law.

The little opposition which was made to the renewal of the war was of a very different character from that which had been manifested at its commencement. There was a deep, though mistaken principle in the opposers of the anti-jacobin war, . . . a passionate persuasion that England was engaged in a bad cause. They who thought thus, believed the declarations of the French, overlooking their actions, or regarding them through a false medium, and being, for the most part, ill-read in history and ignorant of human nature. But after the peace of Amiens there was nothing of this delusion; no man dreamt that the liberties of France were invaded, or the rights of men in danger. They who had wished most sincerely for the triumph of those rights, desired now with equal sincerity that the adventurer might be overthrown, who, having it in his power to establish free governments in France and Italy, had chosen to erect a military tyranny for himself. They who loved liberty, knowing what they loved and wherefore they loved it, could have no other wish: experience had shewn them how widely their principle had been misled, and that very principle having rubbed off the rust of its error, pointed to the true north, and directed them in the right course. The few who opposed the war, opposed it upon the score of its inexpediency, and

the inadequacy of the plea which had been assigned to indicate the approaching rupture. That plea however was a mere official form, like a fiction in law, in no degree affecting the merits of the cause. The question was placed by the minister upon its true grounds, when he said we were at war because we could not be at peace. And it is absurd to call that inexpedient which is inevitable.

The popular character of the war was further manifested by the numbers who immediately enrolled themselves as volunteers. Buonaparte had expected no such unanimity, no such enthusiasm. His generals from Egypt had informed him of what materials the British army was composed, and he had himself received a memorable lesson from the navy at Aboukir and at Acre. Loudly therefore as he had threatened to invade us, the spirit which was displayed upon our shores intimidated him from attempting to put the threat in execution; and he turned away to the easier course of continental aggrandizement; hoping to effect the overthrow of England by excluding her merchandize from Europe, and thus ruining her finances. His operations were now carried on upon a greater scale than had ever before been witnessed in European warfare; his victories were more decisive, his successes more rapid; for having men at command, and being his own general, his progress was never retarded for want of an adequate force, nor embarrassed by vacillating counsels; and as for means. .being troubled with no scruples of any kind, he not only supported his troops upon the countries in which they

were quartered, but exacted contributions from his allies as well as his enemies. One campaign was followed by another, each more destructive than the last; till the peace of Tilsit left him undisputed master of the continent from the Elbe to the Adriatic, with Spain in vassalage, Denmark for his ally, and Russia moving like a puppet as he pulled the wires. That he aspired at universal empire was now scarcely disguised; it even seemed as if some drama of religious imposture was in preparation, and that he meant to enact the part of Mahommed as well as of Charlemagne. As in Egypt he had proclaimed that Destiny directed all his actions, and had decreed from the beginning of the world that *after beating down the Cross* he should come into that country to fulfil the task assigned him; so now he was addressed as the anointed Cyrus of the Lord, . . . the living image of the Divinity, . . . the mortal after God's own heart, to whom the fate of nations was entrusted: and in a catechism, which was to be the first thing taught throughout the French empire, it was inculcated in direct terms, that to honour and serve the Emperor was the same thing as to honour and serve God himself! Under these circumstances peace appeared more remote than ever. An attempt was made to obtain it under the motley administration of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, but even the Foxites while they were in power felt that peace was impossible. And on this occasion the opinion of the citizens of London was again manifested, as at the beginning of the war; for when the Lord-Mayor communicated, on the Royal Exchange, the failure

of the negotiations, the persons who were present gave three cheers, expressing their preference of open war to an insidious peace, as any peace with Buonaparte must have been, and their approbation of the only course which was consistent with the safety and honour of the country. The usurpation of Portugal followed, and at the close of the year 1807, every state upon the continent had declared war against Great Britain, with the single exception of Sweden. The enemy was undisputed master of the land, but England retained the empire of the seas, and two mighty powers were thus opposed to each other which could not be brought in contact. There was no other hope at this time than what wise men derived from a conviction, that such a system of tyranny as that which Buonaparte had established could not possibly be permanent; but nothing like dismay was felt, nothing like despondency; the people were convinced that the continuance of the war was inevitable, and they knew that while it continued the country was safe.

Things were in this state when Buonaparte kidnapped the royal family of Spain, and appointed his brother Joseph to reign in its stead. If error and guilt may be compared, the political blunder in this nefarious transaction was not inferior to the moral wickedness: it gave us the most persevering nation in Europe for our ally, and it gave us also a fair field. From that time the war assumed a new character. They who were acquainted with the country which was now to become the scene of war, and the people with whom we were thus connected by no ordinary

bond of alliance, but by inseparable interest as well as by the loftiest sympathy, felt a calm and settled assurance, that to whatever time the struggle might be prolonged it could only end in the full and entire deliverance of Spain. An impulse of the most generous, the most animating, the most inextinguishable hope was excited in every heart which was not withered by faction, or corrupted by a false and foul philosophy even to rottenness. There were such hearts among us, but they were not numerous; and for a while the general and ebullient feeling with which all Britain overflowed imposed silence upon the lying lips. Even now it is delightful to look back upon that exhilarating time, when after so long and unmitigated a season, hope came upon us like the first breath of summer; . . . when we met with gladness in every countenance, congratulation in every voice, sympathy in every heart; and every man felt prouder than in all former times of the name of Englishman, of the part which his country had acted, and was still called upon to act. These very men who now tell us that the present distress is the effect of wars unjustly commenced and pertinaciously persisted in, when no rational object was to be obtained, . . . these very men who tell us that the war was not popular, that it was the work of a corrupt Parliament and not of the people, . . . these very men belie themselves as well as their country. They knew that no object could be more rational than that for which the war was persisted in, no object more just, more necessary, more popular; they were not such idiots as to think otherwise, not such traitors to human

nature, not such stocks or stones as to be unmoved: they partook the popular joy, the popular enthusiasm; they joined in the unanimous expression of public opinion, which called upon Government to assist the Spaniards with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength of England.

It would be superfluous to retrace, however briefly, the course of the Peninsular war, fresh as it is in recollection, and recorded for everlasting remembrance, as the noblest portion of British history. During its progress we had indeed our ‘battle critics’ at home, who in ‘their deliriums’ of dissatisfaction upon any advantage obtained by ‘their country,’ as Steele says of their predecessors in Marlborough’s day, fought every action over again as the enemy’s allies, represented our victories as defeats, and triumphantly proved that Lord Wellington was no general. And we had our wise men of the North, who came forward, like the son of Beor, to take up their prophecy in behalf of the Moabite; the beast upon which Balaam was mounted could have prophesied as wisely, . . . and would not have been more out of tune; for the voice of the country was in accord with its honour and its duty; with its own dearest interests and with those of mankind.

If the character of the enemy against whom we were contending had been any ways doubtful before the peace of Amiens, subsequent events had now cleared it from all ambiguity. Having touched upon the former part of Buonaparte’s conduct, we will here complete the delineation: *and for the benefit of those eminent patriots*

among us who look upon the Emperor Napoleon as the model of an enlightened prince, in as summary a manner as possible, we will enumerate some of the acts of this their *beau idéal* of a philosophical sovereign, . . this perfect Emperor of the British *Liberals*. It shall be no counterfeit likeness, nor heightened by any false colours: the man is depicted in his actions and in those of the government which was directed by his single will. There is no necessity for insisting upon the murder of Pichegru and of Captain Wright; faith depends in no little degree upon volition; these things were done in a corner, and damning as the proofs are, the *Liberals* do not choose to believe them. Letting therefore these counts of the indictment pass among other acts of supererogatory wickedness, we will enumerate only some of those deeds of individual cruelty and guilt which were committed in the face of the world, in open defiance of God and man, and which no person except an English mob-orator has ever dared either to deny or to defend: the detention of the English travellers in France; the betrayal and imprisonment of Toussaint; the murder of the Duc d'Enghien; the murder of Palm; the murder of Hofer. These were the individual deeds of Buonaparte, . . his own peculiar acts, . . the cold and cowardly crimes of a heart incapable in its very nature of magnanimity, and malignant upon settled system. The tyranny of his home government extended to every thing. His merciless conscription placed all the youth of France at his disposal; and so largely did he draw upon this fund, and so lavishly did he squander it, that

great as the population of France is, it was at length unable to answer the demand, and support his enormous expenditure of blood. The system of education was determined by law, and conducted upon the explicit maxim that all public education ought to be regulated on the principle of military discipline. The plan was framed partly in imitation of the Jesuits, partly of the Mamelukes; and as no person was permitted to act as tutor to another, except upon this plan of instruction, the study of Greek, the mother-tongue of liberty, was so far proscribed throughout France, that no person could acquire it by any other means than self-tuition. Every servant in Paris was registered, that the police might have a spy in every house. The number of printers was limited; only four newspapers in the capital were permitted to touch on political events, and no newspaper or writing of any kind could be published without the inspection and approbation of the government*. To complete the tyranny, as the Bastille had been demolished at the beginning of the Revolution, Buonaparte appointed eight Bastilles in different parts of France, for the reception of persons whom it was convenient to hold in durance, and not convenient to bring to trial. Such was the system of government established in France by the Perfect

* Incredible as the fact may appear, for its absurdity as well as the perverse disposition which it discovers, proposals were circulated in 1813 for reprinting the French *Moniteur* in London, because 'the English press was nearly in the same state of degradation as the press of Russia, and because important facts were often suppressed, coloured, and distorted in the English papers'.—Thus it is that faction makes men fools.

Emperor of the Ultra-Whigs and Extra-Reformers.

The foreign policy of Buonaparte united falsehood, treachery, frantic pride, and remorseless barbarity. Witness the *noyades* at St. Domingo; witness the commandant at Cerigo *, who, in his official correspondence with his superior, informed him that being inconvenienced with about 600 Albanian refugees, he had disembarrassed himself of them by poisoning their wells. Witness Holland, impoverished, deceived, oppressed, and finally usurped! Witness Germany, partitioned and re-partitioned, plundered, ravaged, and insulted, her children forced into the service of their enemy, and sacrificed by myriads to his insatiable lust of conquest! Witness Prussia, her wrongs, her long sufferings, her holy hatred, her noble resurrection and revenge! Witness the black tragedy of the Tyrol! Witness Portugal, where, when the French entered professedly in peace and without the slightest opposition, they exacted a contribution, the amount of which was equal to a poll-tax of a guinea and a half per head, upon the whole population; and where, when they left it, they committed crimes and cruelties of so hellish a character, that it might almost be deemed criminal to recite them. Witness Spain! The Edinburgh Reviewer, indeed, to whose predictions we have before alluded, has said that ‘the hatred of the name of a Frenchman in Spain has been such as the reality would by no means justify;’ and that ‘the detestation of the French

* The evidence for this atrocious fact may be seen in the Third Volume of the Quarterly Review, p. 204.

'government had, among the inferior orders, been 'carried to a pitch wholly unauthorized by its 'proceedings towards them.' The treacherous seizure of their fortresses; the kidnapping of their royal family, to whom, whatever might be the merits of that family, the Spaniards were devotedly attached; and the usurpation of their throne and their country, might in the judgement of ordinary men be thought to authorize a considerable degree of detestation for the government by which such acts had been committed: so it should appear at first sight: . . . to politicians gifted with the faculty of second sight, it may appear differently. But if to these wrongs we add the details of this struggle so inexpiably and inefaceably disgraceful for France, practised as these advocates may be in the defence of bad causes, this would not be found one of those cases which can be 'tolerably plastered over with light cost 'of rough-cast rhetoric.' Let us not, however, lacerate the feelings of the reader with particularizing the horrors of that most atrocious warfare: suffice it to mention as public, notorious, undeniable and official acts, the wholesale murders committed by the military tribunal at Madrid, under that General Grouchy whom the friends of liberty are now honouring with public dinners in America; the cruelties of Marshal Ney in Galicia; the fore-purposed massacres of Marshal Suchet; the decree of Marshal Soult for putting to death all persons who should be taken in arms against the intrusive government; and the decree of General Kellerman, by which, after all horses of a certain standard were seized for the use of the

French, the owners of those which were left, as being below the standard, or as being mares pregnant for more than three months, were ordered to put out the left eye of their beasts, or render them by other proper means unfit for military service!.. Such was the system carried on in foreign countries by the Perfect Emperor of the Ultra Whigs, and Extra Reformers. That any man should raise his voice in behalf of such a tyranny and such a tyrant is wonderful; that any Englishman should do so is monstrous. The distinctions between right and wrong are broad and legible; all men who have sufficient use of reason to be moral and accountable beings, are enabled by God to read them. But society has its idiots as well as nature: and the poor natural of the village workhouse who excites the mockery of brutal boys is less pitiable, in the eyes of thoughtful humanity, than he who, drunk with faction and inflamed with discontent, renders himself a fool at heart.

It was against the tyrant by whom these infernal measures were enjoined, and against the atrocious army by which they were enforced in full rigour, that our war was waged,..not against the French people. We and our allies fought, as the Common Council truly expressed it in their address to the Emperor of Russia, ‘not to subdue
‘but to deliver a misguided people;’ and our efforts were crowned (to use the language of the same address) by the ‘deliverance of the afflicted
‘nations of Europe from the most galling oppression and unprecedented tyranny that ever visited
‘the human race.’ Who does not remember the

universal joy which the overthrow of that tyranny produced? The sense of the country cannot be more faithfully expressed than it was by the same Common Council of London in their address to the Prince Regent.

‘We cannot, Royal Sir,’ said they, ‘upon such an occasion, but look back with the highest admiration at the firmness, the wisdom, and the energy which have been exercised by our beloved country during this long and arduous struggle. Had not Britain persevered, the liberties of Europe might have been lost. Had not her valiant sons been foremost in victory both by sea and land, it is too probable that the glorious emulation exhibited by her great allies would have been still dormant. Had not her triumphant armies under the immortal Wellington co-operated with the brave inhabitants in rescuing the Peninsula from the grasp of an unprincipled invader, Germany and Holland might yet have groaned under the iron despotism of the oppressor, and the efforts of the magnanimous Alexander been ineffectual to relieve them. These astonishing energies we believe to have been called forth by that admirable constitution of government which Britons possess as the best inheritance derived from their fathers, and which with proud satisfaction we observe is considered as affording the true basis of civil liberty by surrounding nations.’

Here the Common Council unequivocally and in the strongest terms deliver their opinion that the policy of the war was wise; that the object was in the highest degree important and desirable *being nothing less than the liberties of Europe;*

that that object had been accomplished through the exertions of this country, and that its happy accomplishment was owing to the firmness and wisdom with which the contest had been pursued, and to the advantages which we derived from the possession of a free constitution. And in thus saying, they spoke the genuine sentiments of the people of England. But lo! this very Common Council of London, "before the shoes were old" in which they followed their former address, make their appearance at court with another, in which they tell the Prince Regent, that the war was 'rash and ruinous, unjustly commenced and pertinaciously persisted in, when no rational object was to be obtained;' and that this as well as sundry other evils has arisen from the corrupt state of the representation by which the people have been deprived of their just share and weight in the legislature! If the Prince had been, like Charles II., disposed to jest with men of this stamp, in what a situation might he have placed them by desiring that the first address might have been read for their edification, as the second had been read for his; and then requesting them to reconcile the two!..The invention of printing in parallel columns was a happy one for consistency like this..e. g.

PHILIP SOSTER.

1814.

'We cannot but look back with
'the highest admiration at the
'firmness, the wisdom, and the
'energy which have been exer-
'cised by our beloved country
'during this long and arduous
'struggle.

PHILIP DRUNK.

1816.

'Our grievances are the natural
'effect of rash and ruinous wars,
'unjustly commenced and perti-
'naciously persisted in.

' Had not Britain persevered, ' No rational object was to be
' the liberties of Europe might ' obtained.
' have been lost.

' These astonishing energies we ' All constitutional controul over
' believe to have been called forth ' the servants of the crown has
' by that admirable constitution of ' been lost, and parliaments have
' government which Britons pos- ' become subservient to the will of
' sess.' ' ministers.'

It may be proper to shew cause why we should have affirmed that Philip was sober in 1814, and drunk in 1816, when Philip himself might choose to reverse the statement, and plead drunk on the former occasion, having, at that time, been dining with kings and emperors. But in the first place, Philip himself cannot be admitted as a fair judge of his own condition; secondly, persons when in possession of their reason see things as they really are, but when they are intoxicated all objects appear to them confused, through the medium of their disordered senses: thirdly, men, who, when in possession of their reason, are sensible, well-disposed, and decently behaved, will, when in liquor, talk nonsense, and become mischievous, quarrelsome, and insulting; for all which reasons it is clear that Philip was sober when the first address was composed, and *non compos mentis* on the latter occasion.

In reality, as Great Britain never before had been engaged in so long or so arduous a war, so never was any war so constantly approved by the great body of the people, because none was ever more unequivocally just. It was a cause to which the strong language of old Tom Tell-truth might be applied, as being ' so just and so religious in ' all human and divine respects, that if the noble

‘ army of martyrs were sent down upon earth to
 ‘ make their fortunes anew, they would choose no
 ‘ other quarrel to die in, nor hope for a surer way
 ‘ to recover again the crown of glory.’

While the war continued, the large expenditure which it occasioned at home* kept all things in activity; the landlord raised his rents as the government increased its imposts, the farmer demanded higher prices for his produce, and every man who had any thing to sell advanced the price of his commodities in like manner and in full proportion. Upon annuitants, and other persons, who, from their sex or age and habits, had no way of improving their limited fortunes, the burthen bore with its whole weight; . . a most respectable class, who suffered severely, but without complaining. Elsewhere it has been shewn in what manner the transition from a state of war

* There is a passage in Bishop Burnet which is strikingly applicable to recent times. He is speaking of Marlborough's wars, and shewing how the nation abounded both in money and zeal. ‘ Our armies as well as our allies were every where punctually paid: the credit of the nation was never raised so high in any age, nor so sacredly maintained: the treasury was as exact and as regular in all payments as any private banker could be. It is true a great deal of money went out of the kingdom in specie; that which maintained the war in Spain was to be sent thither in that manner :—by this means there grew to be a sensible want of money in our nation; this was in a great measure supplied by the currency of Exchequer bills and bank notes; and this lay so obvious to the disaffected party, that they were often attempting to blast, at least to disparage, this paper credit; but it was still kept up. It bred a just indignation in all who had a true love to their country, to see some using all possible methods to shake the administration, which, notwithstanding the difficulties at home and abroad, was much the best that had been in the memory of man: and was certainly not only easy to the subjects in general, but gentle even towards those who were endeavouring to undermine it.’

to a state of peace produced, inevitably, great embarrassment and extensive distress. The war, a customer to the amount of more than fifty millions annually, left the markets: it would be absurd to ask whether or not this must affect the innumerable persons who were employed in providing the articles which it required. The extent to which machinery has been carried has thrown many hands out of employment at home; and the use of that machinery, which was at one time almost exclusively our own, and most of which is of our invention, has been introduced abroad; both inevitable consequences of the improved state of knowledge. The continental nations have learnt to manufacture many articles of necessity for themselves, for which they formerly were, in a great degree, dependent upon us; and they have no money to spare for articles of luxury, because they have been impoverished during twenty years of warfare and oppression. To these causes must be added, what is perpetually operating as a cause of partial distress, the fluctuation of our own capricious fashions, which, as they vary from muslins to silks, and from silks to stuffs, injure alternately the looms of Glasgow and Manchester, of Spitalfields and of Norwich. Add also the consequences of a season which has been more unfavourable to agricultural produce of every kind than any within the memory of man; and whatever difficulties and distresses may exist either among the agricultural or manufacturing part of the people, may be explained without referring them to corrupt parliaments, profligate ministers, and the Prince Regent.

We have before us the resolutions of sundry meetings held in the city of London, to consider the propriety of petitioning the Prince Regent and the Legislature for a reform in Parliament. The resolutions from Bishopsgate assert, that the people are 'goaded with an army of remorseless tax-gatherers, urged on by the cravings of a rapacious, oppressive, and imbecile administration;' they remind us that our history exhibits the patriotic sons of England as 'dismissing and chastising those kings and counsellors, whose profligacy and arbitrary attempts had rendered them obnoxious;' they say that 'the most profligate expenditure among the people's servants, from the lowest to the highest rank, and an unfeeling disregard of the people's wants and miseries, are among the lightest subjects of complaint.' They tell us, that 'statesmen, living upon the public spoil and holding places of high trust, are found in this day to advocate the accursed doctrine of legitimacy:' in other words, the Divine right of kings. They tell us, that the British Government have employed 'their base engine, the standing army, to assist in establishing the Inquisition.' They say, . . . the said resolutioners of Bishopsgate-ward, . . . 'We claim, we demand and insist, that we may have a constitutional voice in the House of the people. A full, fair, and free representation of the people, and parliaments of short duration will immediately tend to restore the country to health, happiness, and vigour.' And then they say, *they* 'shall no longer hear of Habeas-corpus suspension bills, of gagging and treason bills;

measures, be it observed, which they seem very naturally and properly to apprehend.

The resolutions from Farringdon-without complain of 'the long, desolating and profligate war against the French people; a war whose object, character, and consequences, they both reprobate and deplore.' They complain also of 'a standing army, wholly unnecessary and dangerous;' and an 'intolerable horde of state and of parish paupers.' They require a 'complete and radical reform,' assuring us however that they wish it to be 'peaceable and tranquil;' and they are 'convinced that corruption will not dare refuse, or policy misunderstand the prayers and wishes of an united people.' Mr. Coates was the mover of these resolutions;.. not Mr. Romeo Coates, the amateur of fashion, but Mr. Coates, the amateur of gin, who recommends his gin as a wholesome and strengthening beverage, and inveighs in his advertisements against those canting moralists who represent gin-drinking as a vice! Mr. Coates is strong in his resolutions,.. strong and fiery;.. they smack indeed of the still,.. but certainly not of the right British spirit. Mr. Hitchins of Cripplegate-without is even stronger. He tells us that 'the causes which blight all the hopes of the merchant, the manufacturer, the agriculturist, the peasant and the artist, are principally if not altogether to be traced to a system alike hostile to the interests of this country, the progress of freedom, and the welfare of the human race; a system first directed to crush the rising energies of freedom in France, and since employed as fatally in eradicating almost

‘every trace of comfort, and every spark of independence at home.’ He tells us ‘it is in vain to expect that the friends and parties of abuses who now disgrace the honourable House of Commons will ever be brought to sit in judgment upon their own iniquities, or pass the sentence of condemnation upon their own misdeeds.’ The inhabitants of this ward disclaim all party-feeling, all violent ebullitions of personal resentment; they wish to avoid all excesses and disturbances; but they are convinced that nothing short of a radical reform will be effectual, and they recommend this measure as the only one which can save the state or satisfy the people;.. ‘as the only means to prevent the country from experiencing the danger of anarchy and the horrors of civil war, which appear to be the inevitable tendency and result of a further neglect of that constitutional method of restoring lost confidence.’.. Cripplegate has outdone Bishopsgate,.. and Billingsgate may not be able to go beyond it.

‘We asked bread,’ says an orator at one of the mob-meetings in the country, ‘and they gave us a stone, by voting so many thousands for a monument to commemorate *that fatal day Waterloo.*’ At the same meeting a man asserted, that ‘the horrors of the Inquisition had been restored at the point of the British bayonet.’ He, perhaps, in his ignorance, believed, upon the authority of Bishopsgate-ward, the infamous and detestable falsehood which he thus repeated. Truth, says a Jewish proverb, stands upon two legs, and a lie upon one; but this lie has not a

leg' to stand on. The British government has, on one occasion,... the only occasion in its power,... interfered respecting the Inquisition; and it was to stipulate in solemn treaty with its ally, the Prince of Brazil, that he would take measures for abolishing it in his dominions. But the men who invent or repeat every kind of calumny against their country have neither ears to hear, nor understanding to comprehend, nor hearts to feel any thing to its honour. With them Buonaparte is no tyrant, Marshal Ney no traitor, and Waterloo a fatal day. The Monthly Magazine tells us that this country has occasioned the death of 5,800,000 persons, in Calabria, Russia, Poland, Germany, France, Spain, and Portugal. Not Buonaparte, but this country, reader! England,... our country,... our great, our glorious, our beloved country, according to this Magazine, has been the guilty cause of all this carnage! And the worthy editor bawls out for condign punishment upon the authors of the war;... not meaning Buonaparte... he, injured man! being, in the opinion of the Pythagorean knight, innocent of this blood! The said Sir Pythagoras has founded a society for preventing war:... he should apply to his friend, the Ex-emperor, to become the patron of the society.

More than a century has elapsed since Steele expressed his wonder 'that men should be male-contents in the only nation which suffers 'professed enemies to breathe in open air;' and he observed, that the newspapers were as pernicious to weak heads in England, as ever books of chivalry had been in Spain. Would that the

madness which they engender was as harmless in its kind! What would he have said, had he seen the fearful humour of these distempered times, when men, 'who, of all styles, most affect and strive to imitate Aretine's,' are continually addressing the worst passions of the worst part of the community for the purpose of bringing the worst of all imaginable calamities upon their country?

Among the infirmities to which a state is liable, Hobbes reckons the agitations produced 'by pretenders to political prudence, who though bred for the most part in the lees of the people, yet animated by false doctrines, are perpetually meddling with the fundamental laws to the molestation of the commonwealth, like the little worms which physicians call ascarides;'...an odd but congruent similitude,...in reference to which some of our political clubs should take *In Recto* for their motto,...omitting *decus*. But aloe will reach these creatures, and our state physicians must be grievously deficient in their duty if they do not administer the wholesome bitters of the law. Of publications similar to the venomous diatribes which these men send abroad, Mr. Burke has truly said, that 'if we estimated the danger by the value of the writings, it would be little worthy of our attention: contemptible these writings are in every respect. But they are not the cause; they are the disgusting symptoms of a frightful distemper. They are not otherwise of consequence than as they shew the evil habit of the bodies from whence they come. *In that light the meanest of them is a serious thing.* X,

‘however,’ he adds, ‘I should underrate them, and if the truth is that they are not the result but the cause of the disorders, . . . surely those who circulate operative poisons are to be censured, watched, and, if possible, repressed.’ This great statesman has cautioned us also against despising the leaders of factious societies as being too wild to succeed in their undertakings. ‘Supposing them wild and absurd,’ he says, ‘is there no danger but from wise and reflecting men? Perhaps the greatest mischiefs that have happened in the world have happened from persons as wild as those we think the wildest. *In truth they are the fittest beginners of all great changes.*’

This also should be remembered, that men of real talents, when those talents are erroneously or wickedly directed, prepare the way for men of no talents, but of intrepid guilt, and more intrepid ignorance. Marat and Hebert followed in the train of Voltaire and Rousseau; Mr. Examiner Hunt does but blow the trumpet to usher in Mr. Orator Hunt in his tandem, with the tri-color flag before him and his servant in livery behind; and the member of the House of Commons, who takes advantage of his privilege to vilify the Prince and traduce the Government, plays the part of Precursor to some Barchochebas of Moorfields.

We are assured that many ‘intelligent men’, . . . by which term is meant persons who can see farther than others into a mill-stone, . . . believe that the late attempt at insurrection was planned and directed by Ministers. In what manner they

explain this curious plot has not been clearly stated; whether Lord Sidmouth hired persons to shoot at the Lord Mayor in order to revenge himself upon that magistrate for having ridden in triumph through the streets of Westminster; or whether, as appears more probable from the subsequent proceedings and correspondence between them, the Lord Mayor has acted in collusion with Lord Sidmouth, and agreed to be shot at. Upon this politic speculation, the hand-bills which instructed the mob to break open the gunsmiths' shops were printed and circulated by order of Government, and young Watson is no doubt at this time concealed in the Secretary of State's Office. In sad and sober truth such absurdities are gravely advanced; and no absurdities are too gross to be believed by men who are thoroughly possessed with the spirit of faction.

Is it then our opinion that there was a plan for overthrowing the Government by force? It might suffice to reply that those who ordered the flags, that those who circulated the hand-bills, that those who went to the meeting provided with arms, and those who broke open the gunsmiths' shops in order to seize arms, as the hand-bills directed, acted as if they thought so, and as if there was. This we infer..

- That many things having full reference
- To one consent, may work contrariously;
- As many arrows loosed several ways
- Fly to one mark;
- As many several ways meet in one town;
- As many fresh streams run in one self sea;
- As many lines close in the dial's centre;
- So may a thousand actions once afoot
- End in one purpose.

The circumstances which render the multitude more dangerous and more apt instruments for madmen and villains to work with than they ever were in other ages, have been indicated heretofore on more than one occasion. We are treading upon gunpowder; and if we suffer the insane or the desperate to scatter firebrands, it will be but a miserable consolation to know that the explosion by which we perish will bury them also in the ruin which they produce. It would be a perilous inference, that because the design of overthrowing the British Government would be to the last degree extravagant as well as wicked, therefore no such design can have been formed. Men who are under the influence either of political or religious fanaticism are not to be deterred from their purpose either by reason or remorse. What could be more absurd, and at the same time more atrocious, than the Gunpowder Plot? There were Papists in that day who spoke of it, some as of an accident, others as an extravagance of juvenile zeal, others as a ministerial plot, .. just as the anarchists reason at present. But the history of that conspiracy is authenticated beyond all future controversy; the mine was made ready, and the train was laid. We had then an able and vigilant administration, .. England has never produced greater statesmen than those who directed her counsels at that time; and yet when the intended victims were preserved it was by the providence of God, .. for the vigilance of man had been effectually eluded!

Are we then actually in danger of rebellion and evolution? What say the Bishopsgate statesmen

to this question? They tell us that Englishmen are accustomed to *dismiss and chastise obnoxious kings and counsellors*: whether they conceive the Prince Regent and his counsellors to be in this predicament may be readily understood from the whole tenor of their resolutions; and they *claim, demand and insist* upon such a reform as may seem good to the sages of Bishopsgate-ward who moved and voted them. What says Mr. Coates of Farringdon-without and the gin-shop? Mr. Coates informs us that corruption *will not dare refuse*, or policy misunderstand the prayers and wishes of an united people. What say the statesmen of Cripplegate-without? they declare that Parliamentary Reform is the only means *to prevent anarchy and civil war*. A speaker at one of the Westminster meetings said, he trusted 'that under the guidance of Lord Cochrane, they would not scruple, if the load of taxation was still continued, to imitate the example of Hampden, *and refuse to pay it*:' and this speech, it is added, was received with loud applauses. It is not for a court of criticism to take cognizance of such language as this, nor for us to say to what penal statute the men who have uttered it have made themselves amenable. Yet it was by mere accident that the Lord Mayor, who presided at one of these meetings, did not sanction its language in person as well as by deputy: and he with the aldermen and commons of the City of London in Common Council assembled, asserted in that address which called forth so well deserved and dignified a reproof from the Prince, that nothing *but reform* could allay the irritated feelings of the

people;... 'the corrupt and inadequate state of the 'representation' 'being,' they said, 'the cause of 'all these evils:'. . . *all*,... the war,... the progress of manufactures abroad,... the fluctuations of fashion at home,... and the unkindly season which has been experienced every where,... the state of the representation has occasioned them all!

Let us here transcribe an apposite tale to which we have before alluded; it was related by Bishop Latimer in the last sermon which he preached before Edward VI. An assertion as logical as that the state of the representation has been the cause of the late war and of the present embarrassments in trade, had been made against this father of the English Church. 'Here now,' said he, 'I remember an argument of Master More's which 'he bringeth in a book that he made against 'Bilney; and here by the way I will tell you a 'merry toy. Master More was once sent in commission into Kent, to try out (if it might be) 'what was the cause of Goodwin-sands, and the 'shells that stopt up Sandwich-haven. Thither 'cometh Master More and calleth the country before him, such as were thought to be men of 'experience, and men that could of likelihood best 'certify him of that matter concerning the stoppage of Sandwich-haven. Among others came 'in afore him an old man with a white head, and 'one that was thought to be little less than an 'hundred years old. When Master More saw 'this aged man, he thought it expedient to hear 'him say his mind in this matter, for being so old 'a man it was likely that he knew most of any 'man in that presence and company. So Master

‘ More called this old aged man unto him and
 ‘ said, “ Father, (said he,) tell me if ye can, what
 ‘ is the cause of this great arising of the sands
 ‘ and shelves here about this haven, the which
 ‘ stop it up that no ships can arrive here? Ye are
 ‘ the eldest man that I can espy in all this com-
 ‘ pany, so that if any man can tell any cause of it,
 ‘ ye of likelihood can say most in it, or at least
 ‘ wise more than any other man here assembled.”
 ‘ “ Yea forsooth, good master, (quod this old
 ‘ man,) for I am well nigh an hundred years old,
 ‘ and no man here in this company any thing near
 ‘ unto mine age.” “ Well then, (quod Master
 ‘ More,) how say you in this matter? What
 ‘ think ye to be the cause of these shelves and flats
 ‘ that stop up Sandwich-haven?” “ Forsooth,
 ‘ sir, (quoth he,) I am an old man. I think that
 ‘ Tenterton steeple is the cause of Goodwin-sands.
 ‘ For I am an old man, sir, (quod he,) and I may
 ‘ remember the building of Tenterton steeple, and
 ‘ I may remember when there was no steeple at
 ‘ all there. And before that Tenterton steeple
 ‘ was in building, there was no manner of speak-
 ‘ ing of any flats or sands that stopped the haven,
 ‘ and therefore I think that Tenterton steeple is
 ‘ the cause of the destroying and decaying of
 ‘ Sandwich haven.”’

How often in private and in public transactions
 may this anecdote be recollected! Just so the
 corrupt state of the British Parliament has occa-
 sioned the events of the last six and twenty years,
 and produced the distress in Spitalfields, Bir-
 mingham, Staffordshire, and wherever else it
 exists. Who does not see that when the French

abolished monarchy and the christian religion, expelled their nobles, persecuted their priests, murdered their king and queen, guillotined more than 18,000 of their countrymen, and invited the people of other countries to follow their example, by promising to support them in the attempt,.. who does not see that all this proceeded from the corrupt state of the British Parliament! This also is the secret clue to Buonaparte's policy,..the *cause causative* of all his measures. If he went to war with Mr. Addington's administration and refused peace from Mr. Fox's, it was in consequence of the state of representation in England. He detained the British travellers, he proscribed our manufactures, he enslaved the Dutch, he oppressed the Germans, he plundered the Portuguese, he massacred the Spaniards, he aspired openly and avowedly at universal empire, he spread havoc and misery from Lisbon to Moscow, and from the Elbe to the Adriatic,..because 'it 'has been offered to be proved that the great body 'of the people of England are excluded from all 'share in the election of members!' The men who ascribe 'the war and all its consequences to the corrupt state of Parliament, should take their text from Rousseau, and say as he did, when advancing an opinion not more absurd and destitute of truth, 'let us begin by throwing all 'the facts aside, for they do not at all concern the 'question.'

All the reasoners, or rather the no-reasoners in favour of parliamentary reform, proceed upon the belief of Mr. Dunning's or Mr. Burke's famous *motion*, that the influence of the crown has in-

creased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Whether that position was true when the motion was made and carried, might with great justice be controverted. That it had ceased to be so at the beginning of the French revolution in Mr. Burke's judgement, we know; he himself having recorded his opinion in works which will endure as long as the language in which they are written; and the converse of that proposition is now distinctly and decidedly to be maintained. The three possible forms of government, each of which, when existing simply, is liable to great abuses, and naturally tends towards them, have been in this country, and only in this country, blended in one harmonious system, alike conducive to the safety, welfare and happiness of all. That safety, welfare and happiness, depend upon the equipoise of the three component powers, and are endangered when any one begins to preponderate. At present it is the influence of the democracy which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Whatever additional influence the crown has obtained by the increased establishments which the circumstances of the age have rendered necessary, is but as a feather in the scale, compared to the weight which the popular branch of the constitution has acquired by the publication of the parliamentary debates.

But what is meant by Parliamentary Reform? Whenever this question has been propounded among reformists at their meetings, it has operated like the apple of discord: the confusion of *Babel* has been renewed...with this difference, that the modern castle-builders are confounded in

their understandings and not in their speech. One is for triennial parliaments, another for annual; and one, more simple than honest, proposes to petition for triennial only as a step toward obtaining annual. One will have a qualification for voters, another demands universal suffrage. Mr. Orator Hunt proposes voting by ballot; and one of the Penny Orators (whether it were Orator Tag, Orator Rag, or Orator Bobtail, matters not) says, that if Magna Charta were made the bulwark of a General Reform the country would be speedily relieved. He knows as much about Magna Charta as about bulwarks, and as much about the philosopher's stone as about either. They talk of restoring the constitution; . . . what constitution? Every one must have seen a print of the mill for grinding old women young; these state-menders might as reasonably take poor old Major Cartwright to a mill, and expect to see him come out as green in years as he is in judgement, as think that any country can go back to its former state. There are things which are not possible even by miracle. But if the impossible miracle were conceded, at what age would the restorers have their renovated constitution? Would they prefer that of the Norman kings, or of the Plantagenets with all its feudal grievances? Or the golden days of Elizabeth, when parliament trembled as the magnanimous virago asserted her prerogative? Or would they have it as under James I. when the Commons 'did on their hearts' knees agnize' his condescension in making his royal pleasure known? *Or as under William the Deliverer, and his suc-*

cessor Queen Anne, with all the corruption and treason which arrested Marlborough's victories, and betrayed Europe at Utrecht? Or would they accept it as it was even at the commencement of the present reign, when the debates were published in a mutilated and fictitious form, confessedly by sufferance? The multitude being ignorant are at all times easily deceived, and therefore sin through simplicity. But if any man who possesses the slightest knowledge of English history, asserts that the people of England, at any former time, possessed so much influence as during the present reign, and more especially during the last twenty years, he asserts what is grossly and palpably false, and what he himself must know to be so.

The British constitution is not the creature of theory. It is not as a garment which we can deliver over to the tailors to cut and slash at pleasure, lengthen it or curtail, embroider it or strip off all the trimmings, and which we can at any moment cast aside for something in a newer fashion. It is the skin of the body politic in which is the form and the beauty and the life, . . . or rather it is the life itself. Our constitution has arisen out of our habits and necessities; it has grown with our growth, and been gradually modified by the changes through which society is always passing in its progress. Under it we are free as our own thoughts; second to no people in arms, arts and enterprize; during prosperous times exceeding all in prosperity, and in this season of contingent, partial and temporary distress suffering less than any others, abounding in resources, abounding in

charity, in knowledge, in piety, and in virtue. The constitution is our Ark of the Covenant; woe to the sacrilegious hand that would profane it, and woe be to us if we suffer the profanation! Our only danger arises from the abuse of freedom, and the supineness with which that abuse is tolerated by those whose first duty it is to see that no evil befall the commonwealth. Accusations are heaped upon them with as little sense as truth, and with as little moderation and decency as either; let them, however, take heed lest posterity have bitter reason for ratifying the charge of imbecility, . . . which it will have, if they do not take effectual means for silencing those demagogues who are exciting the people to rebellion. Insects, that only 'stink and sting,' may safely be despised; but when the termites are making their regular approaches it is no time to sit idle; they must be stopt by efficacious measures, or the fabric which they attack will fall.

But it has been offered to be proved at the bar of the House of Commons 'that the great body of the people are excluded from all share in the election of members, and that the majority of that House are returned by the proprietors of rotten boroughs, the influence of the Treasury, and a few powerful families.' This has been said by all the reformers since Mr. Grey presented his memorable petition, and the Lord Mayor, with the Aldermen and commons of his party, have repeated it in their addresses to the Prince Regent. Supposing that the assertion had been proved, instead of 'offered to be proved,' does the Lord Mayor, . . . or would the Lord Mayor's fool, if that

ancient officer were still a part of the city establishment, suppose that in a country like this it would be possible to deprive wealth and power of their influence, if it were desirable? or desirable if it were possible? That the great landholders have great influence is certain; that any practical evil arises from it is not so obvious. The great borough-interests have been as often on the side of opposition as with the government; Sir Francis Burdett even makes use of this notorious fact as an argument for reform, and talks of the strength which the crown would derive from diminishing the power of the aristocracy. But that influence has been greatly diminished in the natural course of things. A great division of landed property has been a necessary consequence from the increase of commercial wealth. Large estates produce much more when sold in portions than in the whole, and many have been divided in this way, owing to the high price which land bore during the war, more especially in the manufacturing and thickly peopled counties. Thus the number of voters has increased, and the influence of the great landholders has in an equal degree been lessened. In Norfolk, for instance, the voters have been nearly doubled; in Yorkshire they have more than doubled; and in Lancashire the increase has been more than three-fold. This is mentioned not for the purpose of laying any stress upon it, but to shew that such a change is going on; and that in more ways than one the wealth of the country lessens the power of the landed interest. It ought thus to do: and that purchase of seats, which is complained of as the most scan-

dalous abuse in parliament, is one means whereby it effects this desirable object.

If the reformers will shew in any age of history, and in any part of the world, or in this country at any former time, a body of representatives better constituted than the British House of Commons, . . . among whom more individual worth and integrity can be found, and more collective wisdom; or who have more truly represented the complicated and various interests of the community, and more thoroughly understood them, then indeed it may be yielded that an alteration would be expedient, if such an alteration were likely to produce an amendment. But in a state of society so infinitely complicated as that wherein we exist, where so many different interests are to be represented, and such various knowledge is required in the collected body, no system of representation could be more suitable than that which circumstances have gradually and insensibly established. Of the revolutionist, secret or avowed, adventurer or fanatic, knave or dupe, (for there are of all kinds,) we shall say nothing here, but address ourselves to the well-meaning reformer, who has no intention farther than what he openly professes. What alteration would he propose in our county elections . . . to begin with these as being of most apparent importance. He would neither alter the basis nor the superstructure; the means nor the end. He would desire, perhaps, to improve the manner of election, to extend the qualification for voters in some respects, and limit it in others, . . . things which might be desirable, if in reality they were *not* very unimportant. It might be well that

copyhold estates, as is frequently proposed, should confer the same right as freeholds; that the qualification should be raised from forty shillings to as many pounds, or at least to half as many; and that persons leasing lands to a certain amount, or assessed in direct taxes to a given sum, should be entitled to vote. It might be well also if the votes were taken in the respective parishes. Nothing is so easy as to propose slight alterations of this kind; and in times of perfect tranquillity when they are not demanded with insults and menaces of civil war, it is exceedingly probable that such things may be taken into consideration among the numerous plans for promoting the public good, in which parliament, by means of its committees, is continually employed. They might be conceded for the sake of those who fancy them of importance. The representatives would still be what they are and what they ought to be, . . . men of large landed property, whose families are as old in the country as the oaks upon their estates, having hereditary claims to the confidence of their constituents; . . . in a word, true English gentlemen, well acquainted with local interests, liable to error like other men, but above all suspicion of sinister motives; perfectly independent, and, unless they are stricken with fatuity, sincerely attached to the existing institutions of their country. Such are the men whom the counties * must always return upon any plan of representation; . . . unless the frantic scheme of universal

* Yorkshire and Middlesex have shewn that the author was mistaken.—1830.

suffrage were adopted, which would inevitably and immediately lead to universal anarchy.

As men of family and large estates are the natural representatives of the counties, so are the great towns, with equal fitness, represented by men of eminence in the commercial world, or persons distinguished for ability in the senate, or for their services in the fleets and armies of their country; the first class well known on the spot, and therefore possessing that local influence which wealth and respectability properly confer; the two latter standing upon the high ground of honourable popularity. When county elections are contested, it is usually, as far as the great body of the freeholders are concerned, less a struggle between parties than between families, the colours of the candidates serve as sufficient distinction, and cause enough for as hearty an animosity while it lasts as that between Moor and Christian, or Portugueze and Jew. Unbounded license is given to libels in which truth and decorum are disregarded on both sides, and there is a plentiful expenditure of ale, ribands and small wit. But in those large towns, where elections, strictly speaking, are popular, the fever is of a more malignant type. Here the contest is between parties, and is frequently carried on in a manner not unlike those private wars which are sometimes waged in London on successive Sundays, between the county of Cork men and the county of Tipperary men, or other tribes of the same nation, till heads and *shillelahs* enough have been broken on both sides to satisfy the

point of honour, or till peace is concluded under the mediation of the constables and the magistrates. These elections are more passionate and infinitely more corrupt than those for the counties; in proportion as influence has less power, direct bribery has more, nor is there an imaginable device by which it can be performed, nor an imaginable form of deceit and perjury which is not put in practice. In one of the largest cities of England, the man who marries a freeman's daughter becomes free in right of his wife. Within our memory, when that city was contested, it was a common thing for one woman to marry half a dozen men during the election. The parties adjourned from the church to the church-yard, shook hands across a grave, and pronounced a summary form of divorce, by saying 'now death do us part;' away went the man to give his vote, and the woman remained in readiness to confer the same privilege in different parishes upon as many more husbands as the committee thought it prudent to provide; receiving her fee for each. In that same city, before the act which limited the duration of elections, (a measure of real reform,) we remember a contest which continued for more than six weeks, and not a day past without bludgeon-work in the streets. But the ferocious spirit of a mob election has never been manifested so strongly in any other place as at Nottingham; and it has been asserted that the present state of that city, so ruinous to itself, and so inexpressibly disgraceful to the country, is attributable, in no slight degree, to the manner

in which the excesses and outrages of party spirit have been tolerated, and even encouraged at such times.

It is exceedingly proper that the mode of election should be purely popular in some places; and that the populace and the ultra-liberty boys should return such representatives as Wilkes and Sir Francis Burdett, or even Paull, if they will degrade themselves so far: . . remembering what Lord Cochrane has been, we will speak of what he is in no other terms than those of undissembled compassion and regret. As for Mr. Orator* Hunt, there is no likelihood that any place should return such a representative. . . unless Garratt were chartered to choose a member as well as a mayor. It is not undesirable, in ordinary times, that we should hear exaggerated notions of liberty from men of ready language and warm heads; and in perilous seasons the gallery may always be cleared when harangues are made for the manifest purpose of circulating sedition through the country and inflaming discontent. But there is quite enough of this mixture in the House; and whenever those populous places which send no members at present shall have the privilege extended to them, it is to be hoped that the qualification will be made as respectable, at least, as that of the freehold was when it was originally fixed.

Money and faction bear about an equal share in great popular elections: it is in the small open boroughs where bribery and corruption have full play; where guineas during the golden age were

* Here also the March of Intellect has outstript the writer's foresight, and Henry Hunt, Esq., is now M. P. for Preston! 1831.

served out of a punch-bowl; and where the voters pay their apothecaries' bill according to received custom after an election, from the thirty pounds which are the price of a vote. The law has provided pains and penalties against such practices; and why should government be reproached with a corruption * which exists wholly and exclusively among the people themselves? It is a transaction between Mr. Goldworthy the giver, and Mr. Freeman Bull the receiver; of whom the former may be a staunch whig, and the latter a staunch patriot and honest Englishman, though the one is ready to pay thirty pounds for a vote, and the other to sell it at that price; and Mr. Goldworthy is just as likely to be found in the list of the opposition, or of the reformers, as of the ministerial members. There are indeed very few who sanction the silly question of Reform; but few as they are the number would be lessened, if those among them who have come into parliament by means which that question attempts to stigmatize, were to abstain from voting upon it. Undoubtedly such practices are scandalous, as being legally and therefore morally wrong; but it is false that any evil to the legislature arises from them. When Mr. Curwen brought in his bill for more effectually preventing them, his main argument was that the bill would introduce a larger proportion of the landed interest into the House: . . that it would be an advantage to exclude all other influence from elections, except that of

* As far as any good can be derived from counteracting false and pernicious doctrines by exposing them, it could not be done better than by circulating Mr. Windham's masterly speech upon this subject.

government, will not be admitted by the other branches of the community.

A laudable and useful ambition leads into parliament the opulent merchant and manufacturer; the lawyer high in his profession; the man who has returned with affluence from the East or West Indies, and is conversant with the customs, wants, and interests of our conquests and colonies; the military and naval officer, who in the course of their services have acquired a competent knowledge of affairs upon which the legislature must often be employed. It is for the advantage of the republic also that from a like ambition, men liberally educated, but more richly endowed with the gifts of nature than of fortune, should sometimes prefer the service of the state to that of the army or navy, or of the three professions, as an honourable path to distinction. These persons possess no landed or local interests; they owe their seats therefore to some one into whose hands such interests through the changes of time and circumstances have devolved, and with whom they coincide in political opinions. Agreeing thus upon the general principle, it is not likely that any difference should arise upon a great question; if it should, the member vacates his seat; and whether he who accepts a seat upon this implied condition, be not as unshackled, as independent, as conscientious, and as honourable a member, as the man who keeps away from the discussion of a question upon which his own opinion differs from that of the populace whose favour he courts, is a question which a child may answer. Others there are who have made a

direct purchase of their seats; and these may thus far be said to be the most independent men in the House, as the mob-representatives are undoubtedly the least so. In one or other of these ways the House obtains some of its most useful, most distinguished, and most intelligent members. The end cannot be better than it is; the means might be so; and the most reasonable alteration which could be desired is, that the illegality should be done away; the purchase of a certain number of seats authorized and regulated, and the money appropriated to a fund for public works of local or general utility.

The Ultra Whigs differ widely in the means of reform which they propose; the object however in which they generally agree, is that of rendering all elections popular. The principle that the representative must obey the instructions of his constituents, which many of the reformers profess, would follow as a necessary consequence; and the moment that principle is established, 'chaos is come again;'...anarchy begins, or more truly an ochlocracy,...a mob government, which is as much worse than anarchy, as the vilest ruffians of a civilized country are more wicked than rude savages.

But supposing it were possible to avoid 'the great and broad bottomless ocean-sea-full of evils which popular reform would let in upon us, what is the good which it is expected to produce?...what are the proposed advantages for which we are to hazard the blessings we possess? First in the list the Common Council reckon the abolition of 'all useless places, pensions, and

‘ sinecures.’ Supposing the whole abolished, to what might the public relief, or in other words, the diminution of taxes, amount? . . not to a yearly tax of twopence-halfpenny a head upon the population! So groundless and so senseless is the clamour which would take away from the sovereign the power of reward, and from the government that of paying the public services. And the consequence would be, that every person who was not born to a large estate, would be excluded from political life, and the government must fall exclusively into the hands of the rich. These things may sometimes be unworthily bestowed, and some of them may be unreasonably great, . . though be it remembered that those which are so (the tellerships) expire with the lives of the present holders. But their existence is indispensable to the very frame of government. Those persons who tell the credulous and deluded people that taxes are levied for the good of administration, and who represent our statesmen as living and fattening upon the public spoil, must either be grossly ignorant, or wicked enough to employ arguments which they know to be false. The emoluments of office almost in every department of the state, and especially in all the highest, are notoriously inadequate to the expenditure which the situation requires. Mr. Pitt, who was no gambler, no prodigal, and too much a man of business to have expensive habits of any kind, died in debt, and the nation discharged his debts, not less as a mark of respect, than as an act of justice. But as it is impossible from the emoluments of office

to make a provision for retirement, no man of talents, who is not likewise a man of fortune, could afford to accept of office, unless some reasonable chance (and it is no more than a chance) of permanent provision were held out; and this is done in the cheapest manner by the existence of sinecures. Mr. Perceval, for instance, could not have abandoned his profession to take that part in political affairs which has secured for him so high a place in the affections of his countrymen and in the history of his country, if a sinecure had not been given him to indemnify him in case he should be driven from office, . . . an event which might so probably have occurred in the struggle of parties. In this instance there was an immediate possession; but in general the prospect of succeeding to one when it may become vacant suffices; and in no other way could men of talents be tempted so frugally into the service of the state. Whether it would be an improvement upon the government to have it administered only by the rich, is a question which needs no discussion.

‘A delusive paper currency’ is enumerated by the Lord Mayor and Common Council, in their unfortunate petition, as one cause of our ‘grievances.’ What! is the ghost of Bullion abroad? Buried as it was ‘full fathom five’ beneath reams of forgotten disquisitions, colder and heavier than any marble monument, what conjuror hath raised it from the grave? This topic could only be expected from the meta-politicians as they have aptly been called), who bewilder themselves with abstractions,

and stupify all who listen to them : but that it should be taken up by merchants of the first commercial city in the world, is indeed a portentous instance of the manner in which objects are distorted when seen through the medium of passion. No fitter person could be called upon to lay a ghost than the Rector of Lincoln College, who could talk Greek to it if necessary. He truly tell us, that the difficulty does not consist in there being *too much*, but *too little* money ; that the sudden subtraction of so much paper-currency has been a direct and obvious cause of the stagnation of industry ; and he recommends an increase of the circulating medium to a great amount as the first measure necessary for meeting the exigency of the times.

The main objects then which it is proposed to effect by Parliamentary Reform are these : the abolition either of all influence in elections (which is just as possible as it would be to abolish the east wind, and to annul the law of gravitation by act of parliament) ; or of all monied influence (which would take away all counterpoise from the landed interest in the legislature) ; the abolition of pensions and sinecures, whereby every man who is not born to a large fortune would be excluded from state affairs, and the government must necessarily become an oligarchy of the rich ; and a further subtraction of currency, . . . too much having already been subtracted . . . As far as a Reform in Parliament could effect any of these objects, (supposing it were possible that it should stop here,) it would aggravate every ill which it pretends to cure ; and instead of relieving the distress of any one branch of the community

bring infinite distress upon all. How indeed is it possible that it could relieve them? Can it increase the consumption of iron, and thereby set the foundries at work, and give activity to the collieries? Can it compel the continental nations to purchase more of our goods, and encourage English manufactures while their own are starving? If experience has failed to teach our manufacturers and merchants the ruinous folly of making the supply exceed the demand, and glutting those markets where they have no competitors, would a Reform in Parliament make them wiser? Can it repair the ruin which has been extended over the whole continent by Buonaparte's frantic tyranny, and enable those customers who now are in want of necessities themselves to purchase from us the superfluities wherein, in better days, they were accustomed to indulge? Can it regulate the seasons, and ensure the growth of corn?.. when we know to our cost how utterly unable it is to regulate even its price!

But the petitioners tell us that a Reform in Parliament will calm the apprehensions of the people, and allay their irritated feelings!.. Their apprehensions! Of what are they apprehensive? Are their liberties threatened? Is Parliament, then, about to be suspended or disused, and ship-money levied by virtue of the prerogative? Do they apprehend that arbitrary power is to be established by 'that base engine of our profligate statesmen, 'the standing army,' and the bayonets of the Hanoverians? Or do they apprehend that there is a design to bring back popery, and that the beautiful works of art with which England has

recently been enriched, not from the plunder, but by the gratitude of Italy, may prove to be saints in disguise, to be installed each upon his altar as soon as the plot is perfect? Of this danger, at least, the Ultra-Whigs stand in no fear... Of what then are they apprehensive? This is a question for which the Caledonian Oracle has happily already uttered a response. That high and veracious authority affirms that there exists among us 'a servile tribe' composed of 'enemies of liberty,' 'cold-blooded sycophants of a court,' 'vulgar politicians,' 'impostors,' and persons of 'extreme bad faith,' all of whom the said Oracle designates by the apt and convenient name of Quietists, because they assert that the British people are at this time living under a free government, and that their freedom is in no danger; an opinion which, if it continues, to use the very oracular words, '*bids fair to naturalize among us even now the worst abuses of foreign despotisms.*'... Indeed! We have heard of nothing so alarming since the conspiracy between Dr. Bell and the Archbishop of Canterbury was revealed from the same infallible shrine. Yes, the Oracle tells us that it is our duty to keep alive 'a jealousy of royal encroachments:' and that '*confidence in our rulers is as foolish as it is unworthy of a free people.*' 'We may rest assured,' it says, 'that a sovereign will be too apt to exchange his duty for the very easiest and basest of employments,... the sacrifice of all a nation's interests to his own.' It tells us that we have seen the Crown 'calling upon Parliament to support the expenses of the war, and withdrawing from Parliamentary

‘ control and from all participation, *the whole profits of the victory.*’ It says ‘ this servile tribe (the Quietists) have contrived to borrow the authority of Mr. Burke for their bad cause, and to persuade the unthinking mass of mankind that they act in concert with that great man in their warfare (*the warfare of the Quietists*) against the rights of the people, and their mockery of the champions of the constitution. But it is fit to be remarked how unfairly he is called in to their assistance.’ If that great man could speak from the grave, with what a voice of thunder would he give the lie to this impostor who tells us that our danger at this time is from the Crown, not from the spirit of revolution and anarchy; and that he, were he living, would throw his weight into the popular scale! ‘ *At home and abroad,*’ the Oracle tells us, ‘ *we are in profound peace;*’ and it adds, ‘ now then let us, instead of *crouching before domestic oppression,* bethink us in good earnest of repairing in that constitution which our triumphs have saved, the breaches which the struggle itself has occasioned.’ Who but must smile to find the Oracle, which *Philipized* during the contest, confessing now that the country has been ‘ saved ’ by that triumph which its own cowardly counsels would have rendered impossible !

But are we in such perfect peace at home as is thus gravely asserted? . . . If so, with what reason is it, that one set of City Resolutioners ‘ contemplate with the deepest dismay and agony the too probable issue of such a state of things;’ . . . that others menace us with ‘ anarchy and the

‘ horrors of civil war, as the inevitable result if ‘ Parliamentary Reform be further neglected;’.. that tavern-orators and mob-orators tell us ‘ a ‘ crisis is at hand;’..and that the demagogues, in their weekly and daily diatribes, are stimulating the people to bring into practice what the Oracle at this precise time, with its usual felicity, calls the *sacred principle of Resistance* ? A provincial paper is before us, in which ‘ every mechanic in ‘ the country who has legs to carry him, is invited ‘ to a general meeting to embrace the glorious opportunity of manfully asserting his rights in a ‘ peaceable and constitutional manner, and to ‘ hoist the flag of general distress.’ And the petitioners of the Common Council assert that ‘ nothing but Parliamentary Reform will allay ‘ the irritated feelings of the people.’ By *the people*, of course, the discontented faction is meant,.. the deceivers and the deceived.. according to that figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole,..a political synecdoche. Upon the propriety of concession to a faction in this temper, Burleigh has left us his opinion, when, in reference to the factions of his days, he asked Elizabeth whether she would ‘ suffer them to be strong to ‘ make them the better content, or discontent them ‘ by making them weaker; for what the mixture ‘ of strength and discontent engenders,’ says the veteran statesmen, ‘ there needs no syllogism to ‘ prove.’

The Oracle would be satisfied with a simple change of situation between the Ins and the Outs. How much would satisfy the petitioners of all classes, the London citizens who prepare their

own grievances, and the poor deluded mechanics in the country who receive them ready-made in one of Major Cartwright's three hundred circulars, it would be difficult to say; nor can they themselves tell. And if all these parties were contented, (than which, the mind of man can imagine nothing more impossible,) there remain the Spencean Philanthropists, a set of men not to be confounded with any of whom we have hitherto spoken: men who know distinctly what they mean, and tell us honestly what they aim at, . . . infinitely more respectable than the shallow orators who declaim about Reform, 'with many words making nothing understood;' and far more dangerous, inasmuch as great and important truths, half understood and misapplied, are of all means of mischief the most formidable. It is fit that our readers should have their political confession of faith before them.

SPENCE'S PLAN

For Parochial Partnerships in the Land
Is the only effectual Remedy for the
Distresses and Oppressions of the People.

The Landholders are not Proprietors in chief; they are but the
Stewards of the Public;

For the LAND is the PEOPLE'S FARM.

The Expenses of the Government do not cause the misery that
Surrounds us, but the enormous exactions of these
'Unjust *Stewards*.'

Landed monopoly is indeed equally contrary to the benign
Spirit of Christianity, and destructive of
The Independence and Morality of Mankind.

'The Earth is for all;'

Yet how deplorable
Nor is it possible

the great Mass of the People!
as to be radically amended, but
not of a system
of Nature and Justice.

Founded

Experience demonstrates its necessity; and the Rights of Mankind
Require it for their preservation,

To obtain this important object, by extending the knowledge of the above system, the society of Spencean Philanthropists has been instituted. Further information of its principles may be obtained by attending any of its sectional meetings, where subjects are discussed calculated to enlighten the human understanding; and where also the regulations of the Society may be procured, containing a complete developement of the Spencean system. Every individual is admitted, free of expense, who will conduct himself with decorum.

The Meetings of the Society begin at a quarter after eight in the evening, as under:

First Section every Wednesday, at the Cock, Grafton-street, Soho.
Second, Thursday, Mulberry Tree, Mulberry ct. Wilson-st. Moorfields,
Third, Monday, Nag's Head, Carnaby-market.
Fourth, Tuesday, No. 8, Lumber-street, Mint, Borough.

In all the schemes which have been devised for a perfect society since men first began to speculate upon such subjects, the principle of a community of goods has in some degree entered; and certain approaches toward it, though under many modifications, have been made both in ancient and modern times, as in Crete and in Sparta, among the Peruvians, and by the Jesuits in Paraguay. Such a community prevailed among some of the primitive Christians, though no law of the Gospel enjoined it; the Moravians in Germany approach very nearly to it at this time. The mendicant orders were established on the same principle and have thriven upon it, *nihil habentes et omnia possidentes*; the Papal Church, with its usual wisdom, (for that church assuredly possesses the wisdom of the serpent,) having prevented the principle from becoming dangerous by thus sanctioning, and taking it into its service. In America also it is acted upon by certain ob-

seure sects, living inoffensively and industriously in small communities. A religious influence has prevailed in all these instances; Lycurgus could not have succeeded without the assistance of Apollo, and Mango Capac was the son of the Sun. The doctrine becomes formidable when it is presented as a political dogma, with no such feeling to soften and sanctify it. Joel Barlow, the American republican, who died when lackeying the heels of Buonaparte on his expedition into Russia, perceived that the fashionable doctrines of liberty, of which he was so warm an advocate, tended this way, and must end there if they were pursued; but he thought proper to adjourn *sine die* the time for carrying these ultimate principles into effect. There is reason for supposing that Robespierre at the time of his overthrow had formed some extravagant project of this kind; he spoke of 'momentous secrets which a kind of 'pusillanimous prudence had induced him to conceal;' and he promised to disclose in his will, if he should be cut off prematurely, the object to which what he called the triumph of liberty tended. If Babœuf may be believed, this object was an equalization of property, an object which Babœuf* attempted by the most atrocious means to bring about, but perished in the attempt. Happily it was made too late; sick of horrors and satiated with blood, the people were weary of revolutions, and France escaped a convulsion more dreadful than any which it had experienced.

* A brief account of this conspiracy, collected from the official documents, is in the seventh volume of the Quarterly Review, p. 417-422. It is a curious part in the history of the French Revolution.

This, however, is not the theory of the Spencean philanthropists. These root-and-branch reformers take their name from a poor man, who, if he had not unluckily lived in the days of the French Revolution, might have been a very inoffensive member of society, and remembered only, if he had been remembered at all, among those writers who have amused themselves by building constitutions in the air, instead of castles. 'When I began to study,' says he, 'I found every thing erected on certain unalterable principles. I found every art and science a perfect whole. Nothing was in anarchy but language and politics. But both of these I reduced to order: the one by a new alphabet, and the other by a new constitution.' The new alphabet of this modest reformer we have not had the fortune to see; it seems, however, that the first edition either of his *New Constitution*, or his *Trial*, was printed in what he calls his 'Natural or Philosophical Orthography.' His political opinions were first propounded in the form of a Lecture, read before the Philosophical Society of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1775, and printed immediately afterwards; from which time, he says, 'he went on continually publishing them in one shape or other.' They are fully and harmlessly explained in his *Constitution of Spensonia*, a country in Fairy Land; situated between Utopia and Oceana. 'The Spensonian Commonwealth is one and indivisible;' and, 'the Sovereign People is the Universality of Spensonian citizens.' Divested of such nonsensical language, which was then in full vogue, and too much of which still passes current, his scheme is, that the soil belongs

to the state, and that individuals should rent their lands and tenements from their respective parishes; the rent being the revenue, and the surplus, after all public expenses are defrayed, to be divided equally among all the parishioners; every kind of property being permitted except in land. The larger estates are to be leased for one and twenty years, and at the expiration of that term re-let by public auction; the smaller ones by the year: and larger ones subdivided as the increase of population may require. The legislative power is vested in an annual parliament, elected by universal suffrage, women voting as well as men, for the purpose, it may be presumed, of preserving quietness at elections; the executive is in the hands of a council of twenty-four, half of which is to be renewed annually. Every fifth day is a sabbath of rest, not of religion; for though this constitution is proclaimed in the presence of the Supreme Being, no provision is made for worshipping Him. All the Spensonians are soldiers; and in the Spensonian Commonwealth, 'Nature and Justice know nothing of illegitimacy.' To the end of this Constitution an Epilogue is annexed, in decent verse, saying that the Golden Age will no longer be accounted fabulous, now that mankind are about to enjoy

..All that prophets e'er of bliss foretold,
' And all that poets ever feigned of old.'

And these verses, ..to shew the strange humour of the man, and the vulgarity which adhered to him, ..are followed by a 'Chorus,' to the tune of 'Sally in our Alley:—

' Then let us all join heart and hand
 ' Thro' country, town, and city,
 ' Of every age and every sex,
 ' Young men and maidens pretty;
 ' To haste this Golden Age's reign
 ' On every hill and valley;
 ' Then Paradise shall greet our eyes
 ' Thro' every street and alley.'

In any other age this might have gone quietly to the family vault. But the French Revolution made Spence suppose that the time for realizing his speculations was arrived; and the manner in which he proposed to do this brought him under the cognizance of the Attorney-General, . . how deservedly, a brief specimen of his philanthropical proposals will shew:—

' We must destroy,' he says, ' all private pro-
 ' perty in land. The Landholders' (observe,
 Mr. Coke, of Norfolk!) ' are like a warlike
 ' enemy quartered upon us for the purpose of
 ' raising contributions, therefore any thing short
 ' of a total destruction of the power of these
 ' Samsons will not do; and that must be accom-
 ' plished, not by *simple shaving*, . . (look to it,
 Mr. Coke, of Norfolk!) ' not by simple shaving,
 ' which leaves the roots of their strength to grow
 ' again; . . no: we must *scalp** them, or else they

* This, as may be supposed, was a favourite passage with the author. He adds, in a note, that ' the overbearing power of great men by their revenues, and the power of Samson by his hair, are strikingly similar, and shew such men to be dangerous companions in society, till scalped of their hair, or revenues. For it is plain, that if the Lords of the Philistines had scalped Samson, instead of only shaving him, they might have saved both their lives and their temple.' The Philistines in France were of this opinion, and to make short work as well as sure, they employed a machine which took off head and all.

' will soon recover, and pull our Temple of Li-
 ' berty about our ears. Nothing less than a
 ' complete extermination of the present system of
 ' holding land will ever bring the world again to
 ' a state worth living in. But how is this mighty
 ' work to be done? I answer it must be done at
 ' once. For the public mind being suitably pre-
 ' pared by my little tracts, a few contiguous pa-
 ' rishes have only to declare the land to be theirs,
 ' and form a Convention of parochial deputies:
 ' other adjacent parishes would immediately follow
 ' the example; and thus would a beautiful and
 ' powerful New Republic instantaneously arise in
 ' full vigour. In fact, it is like the Almighty say-
 ' ing, Let there be light, and it was so: . . . So the
 ' people have only to say, Let the land be ours,
 ' and it will be so. For who, pray, are to hinder
 ' the people of any nation from doing so, when
 ' they are inclined? Are the landlords more nu-
 ' merous in proportion to the people than the
 ' officers in our mutinous fleets were to their
 ' crews? Certainly not. Then landsmen have
 ' nothing to fear more than the seamen, and in-
 ' deed much less; for after such a mutiny on
 ' land, the masters of the people would never
 ' become their masters again.' . . . Look to it, Mr.
 ' Coke of Norfolk, . . . read, learn, mark, and inwardly
 digest!

For this publication the Scalping Philanthropist
 was most deservedly prosecuted; having before-
 richly entitled himself to this distinction by a pe-
 riodical farrago called 'Pig's Meat,' wherein the
 same doctrines were promulgated, and circulated
 in the cheapest form among the lower classes of

tradesmen and mechanics. We remember to have heard that he excited compassion at his trial by his wretched appearance, and the pitiable fanaticism with which he was possessed: for the man was honest; he was not one of those demagogues who make mischief their trade because they find it a gainful one; he asserted nothing but what he believed, and would have suffered martyrdom for his opinions. He called himself, in his defence, ‘The unfee’d advocate of the disinherited seed of Adam.’

‘This, gentlemen,’ said he, ‘is the Rights of Man! and upon this Rock of Nature have I built my Commonwealth, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.’ ‘I solemnly avow,’ he continued, ‘that what I have written and published has been done with as good a conscience; and as much philanthropy, as ever possessed the heart of any prophet, apostle, or philosopher, that ever existed. And, indeed, I could neither have lived or died in peace, having such important truths in my bosom unpublished.’

This was

— a tough fellow: one that seemed to stand
Much on a resolute carelessness, and had
A spice of that unnecessary thing
Which the mysterious call Philosophy.

He stood alone, he said, unconnected with any party, and considered as a lunatic, except by a thinking few. Even the professed friends of liberty kept aloof from him, and would rather, if they could consistently, join in the suppression than the support of his opinions. He pleaded his own cause, being too poor to retain either attorney

or counsel. And when he was brought up to judgement, the simple statement which he gave of his treatment in Newgate ought to have produced some reform in the scandalous state of our prisons.

‘Perhaps, my lords,’ said he, ‘I have entertained too high an opinion of Human Nature, for I do not find mankind very grateful clients, I have very small encouragement indeed to rush into a prison, on various accounts. For, in the first place, the people without treat me with the contempt due to a lunatic; and the people within treat me as bad, or worse, than the most notorious felon among them. And what with redeeming and ransoming my toes from being pulled off with a string while in bed, and paying heavy and manifold fees, there is no getting through the various impositions.’ But he excused the Keeper of Newgate, saying these things were unknown to him, because it was dangerous to complain; ‘for nobody could conceive what dreadful work went on among such ruffians, but those who have had the misfortune to be locked up with them.’

It is fortunate that this man was not a religious as well as a political enthusiast. He was poor and despised, but not despicable; for he was sincere, stoical, persevering, single-minded, and self-approved; with means less powerful, doctrines less alluring, in far less favourable times, and under circumstances equally or more discouraging, Francis of Assissi and Ignatius Loyola, succeeded in establishing those orders which have borne so great a part in the history, not only of the Romish Church, but of the world. No doc-

trines could be more directly subversive of the peace and welfare of society, than those which he was disseminating in the way which was most dangerous. The appropriate punishment (for they who can be blind to the danger, and who assert that such doctrines should be suffered to circulate unrestrained, are fitter inhabitants for Anticyra than for England) would have been transportation; at once doing justice to the community by preventing a repetition of the offence, and dealing mercifully with the offender by removing him to a country where he would be inoffensive, if not useful. He was sentenced to a fine of twenty pounds, and one year's imprisonment at Shrewsbury; a sentence so lenient as to shew that Lord Kenyon very properly regarded the individual with pity: the mildness of the sentence is honourable to the judge, its inadequacy is not so to the laws. Having suffered it, he became an itinerant vender of books and * pamphlets, chiefly his own works, which he carried about in a vehicle constructed for the purpose; and thus he supported himself, whilst all his leisure was devoted to the promotion of his plan, till his death, which happened about two years ago. Thus it appears that for more than twelve years after the termination of his confinement, he was constantly employed in sowing the dragon's teeth! The harvest is now beginning to appear.

Let us hear the evidence of the Monthly Magazine upon this subject. This Journal asserts, that the late rioters were 'actuated by their con-

* The second edition of his Trial was one of these pamphlets: and it contained the whole of the work for which he was prosecuted!

‘victions in favour of a plan published by one Spence, for the more equal occupation of land; to introduce which plan societies seem to have been formed throughout the metropolis.’ It also claims for itself the merit of advancing the same principles as those of the Scalping Philanthropist: for these are its words:—

‘Much curiosity being excited in regard to the Spencean Plan of Public Economy, it will be useful to state, that the details of the system may be found in a small pamphlet called *Christian Policy*, by Thomas Evans, Librarian to the Society of Spencean Philanthropists, at No. 8, Newcastle-street, Strand. Mr. Evans appears to have been most cruelly used by the Pitt administration: and having been drilled into the science of politics in the school of persecution, his pamphlet is written with considerable energy. We collect from it that the main object of the Society is a more equal *occupation* (not *proprietorship*) of land; a principle which has often been urged in the pages of this Magazine. Something must be radically wrong, if industry should suffer from want in a country in which there are but two and a half million of families to forty-two millions of acres of cultivated land; affording, under a wise policy, the produce of seventeen acres to every family, or four times as much as it could consume. Skilful labour in any branch of useful industry ought therefore to yield abundance, even though the proprietary in land should remain exactly as it does at present.’

Thus far the Magazine of Sir Richard Phillips.

Knight and Ex-Sheriff, Buonapartist, Member of the Society for Abolishing War, Pythagorean, and Spencean Philanthropist.

There is, however, another person to be examined in this case, . . . Thomas Evans, the librarian, himself. And here, the first thing which appears is, that Mr. Evans, instead of having been drilled into the science of politics in the school of persecution, as the Pythagorean Journal asserts, was in reality sent to that school in consequence of being too forward as a volunteer in the said science; Mr. Evans telling us that he was arrested during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, as being at that time Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, and having given in his present pamphlet good reason for concluding that he was not arrested without good cause. Though this librarian has affixed the title of Christian Policy to his book, he makes no other pretension to the character of Christian himself than as a Spencean philanthropist, and informs us, that ‘this man, Christ, was a Roman slave, crucified as a slave (the mode of execution peculiar to Roman slaves) for preaching the seditious doctrine that God was the proprietor of the earth, and not the Romans; that all men were equal in his sight, and consequently ought not to be slaves to another, nor to the Romans, for which he was crucified by the Romans.’ Mr. Evans is equally well read in history and in the Gospel! This is quite enough of his religion; let us look now at his political information. France, he says, at the beginning of the Revolution, supplicated

peace upon bended knees, and would have conformed to just and reasonable restraints:..the authority for this important fact must be in the Spencean library, for it certainly exists no where else. England, however, went to war, and in the course of the war discovered that the export of grain was the most lucrative branch of trade. This produced the blockading system, and the orders in council; and this monopoly having been lost, all the means of greatness on which the empire depended are passed away as it were in a moment, never to return. Such has been the effect of the impolicy of putting down Napoleon to elevate Alexander. The connection of this reasoning is as clear as the facts themselves are original...

‘ Napoleon was a mere pigmy to Alexander;
‘ his boasting served to talk about, but he could
‘ have been managed and guarded against...
‘ Alexander is a still steady man of business, laying firm hold of all he can get and relinquishing nothing... We are at present under the influence
‘ of the Vienna Congress of Kings. The annihilation of the Irish parliament, and the establishment of a military government, have obliged
‘ the Irish people to exist almost entirely upon
‘ potatoes (potatoes, of course, not having been known in that country before the Union). Here,
‘ in England, we are even worse, expiring, writhing and agonizing at every pore under the torturing domination of the Pagan fleshmongers of
‘ the Continent. Courts, and kings, and lords,
‘ and landlords, and priests, are all pagans: they

‘adhere with pertinacity to Paganism at this
‘time; for you find in their dwellings the pictures,
‘the statues, the busts of their Jupiters, Junos,
‘Apollons, Dianas, Venuses,’ &c. &c.

Such is the pamphlet which Sir Pythagoras recommends as being written with considerable energy; and such the science of politics into which Mr. Evans has been drilled.

Let us proceed to its practical part.—

‘Landlords, and landlords only, are the op-
‘pressors of the people.. . The time is come that
‘something must be done; then let that some-
‘thing be effectual; remember that had the French
‘people established a partnership in the land, no
‘imperial tyranny ever could have raised its head
‘in that country, nor could the present Pagan res-
‘toration have taken place. Now is the time to
‘cancel Domesday-book, and establish a partner-
‘ship in the land: there is no other means to
‘prevent the establishment of a military despot-
‘ism, or all the horrors of a bloody revolution.
‘Great as this undertaking is, it can be easily
‘effected. The easy process is to declare that the
‘territory of these realms shall be the people’s
‘farm; thus transferring all the lands, waters,
‘mines, houses, and all feudal permanent pro-
‘perty to the people. This will injure no one,
‘and benefit all; the alteration which is proposed
‘being only that all persons possessed of houses or
‘lands shall in future pay rent for them instead of
‘receiving it. The government is to remain as it is;
‘pensions to be allotted to the King, Princes and
‘Nobles, Clergy and House of Commons, and the
‘remaining balance of the whole rent-roll to be

‘divided among the whole people, . . . to every man, woman, and child, being the profit of their natural estate, without tax, toll, or custom; which would be near four pounds a-head annually!’

The great barons, it is admitted, may object to this; but they must submit quietly: and all ranks and conditions are called upon to form affiliated societies to bring into effect this revolution of the Spencean or Scalping Philanthropists. There is, indeed, as Sir Pythagoras observes, *considerable energy* in these proposals. But let not this be despised and overlooked for its extravagance*. ‘No landlords, youfools,’ is the open motto which the Spenceans write upon the wall and circulate upon stamp money; and Sir Pythagoras tells us that the Spa Fields Rioters were ‘*actuated by their convictions in favour of this plan.*’

The reader will have observed, that king, lords, and commons, are tolerated in the librarian’s scheme, whereas, according to the original system, ‘the Spensonian Republic is one and indivisible,’ a trifling concession to existing prejudices; or, more probably, to existing laws. The Ultra-Whigs and Extra-Reformers disclaim the Spenceans, and with perfect sincerity. These levellers are not to be confounded with the factious crew who clamour they know not why, for they know not what, and huzza any blockhead with a brazen face and a bell-metal voice, who will

* The last edition of the Spencean hand-bill says,

“Read!—Christian Policy, the Salvation of the Empire,”
Price 1s. 6d.—Published by T. Evans, 8, Newcastle-street, Strand,
and sold by all Booksellers.

talk nonsense to them by the hour. The Spenceans are far more respectable than these, for they have a distinct and intelligible system; they know what they aim at and honestly declare it. Neither is the Agrarian system so foolish, or so devoid of attraction, that it may safely be despised. It has found a miserable advocate in the quondam Secretary of the Corresponding Society; and yet even under such auspices the levellers have organized themselves into regular sections, they are increasing in numbers, and they are zealously spreading their opinions. But if the system were taken up by some stronger hand, (whether an enthusiast should embrace it, or some profligate journalist think it a profession to thrive by,) compared to all other weapons of discontent, it would be found as Thor's mallet to a child's pop-gun. If the English Revolution were once commenced, it would go on to this point, before it reached its inevitable termination in an iron military tyranny. Let the Ultra-Whigs make the breach, and the Spenceans will level the wall: what the shavers begin the scalpers will finish:.. but Samson is neither shorn nor blinded, and the Philistines have given him fair warning.

It would not be easy to make such of the Spenceans as honestly believe in the practicability and wisdom of their own system, perceive the strong objections to which it is liable; for men are very difficultly convinced against their will. Its supposed benefits they clearly see, and there seems no reason why they should not combine among themselves to carry their principle into effect, and enjoy all the advantage that may be

derived from carrying on their respective callings in town and farming in the country, upon a joint stock, for the benefit of the society. Let them make the experiment: if their theory be found to fail in practice, the evil is confined to themselves, . . if it succeed, they will have the experiment to appeal to, proselytes will not be wanting, and they will increase and multiply. They would form a harmless and perhaps a useful variety among our sects. But Liberty and Property are words which, in this free country, have hitherto gone together: and these persons must not attempt to subvert society for the sake of trying their theory upon the great scale. This would be as preposterous and as wicked as it would be to set the metropolis on fire, for the purpose of rebuilding it with more regularity upon a new plan. If they are well meaning men they will attempt to demonstrate the utility of their schemes in a manner that will bring no injury to others. But the cry of No Landlords! and the promulgation of opinions which threaten every man's property, will not be tolerated even in this season of portentous license, . . a license which can no longer be suffered consistently with public safety.

We have now examined the grounds upon which some weak men, some mistaken or insane ones, and other very wicked ones are endeavouring to excite rebellion. We have shewn that it was not in the power of the British Government to avoid the war in the first instance, or at any time to conclude it. It was a war undertaken *not for ambition, not for the lust of conquest,*

not, as is lyingly asserted, for the interests of a particular family, but from a cause of just fear, as Bacon describes it, ‘that *justus metus qui cadit in constantem senatum in causâ publicâ* : not out of umbrages, light jealousies, apprehensions afar off, but out of clear foresight of imminent danger. And as long as reason is reason, a just fear will be a just cause of a preventive war.’ At the commencement it was popular beyond all former example, as being most unequivocally inevitable and just ; and that popularity continued till its triumphant close. It is then impudently false, as well as egregiously absurd, to charge that war as a crime upon the Government, and arraign Government for the distress which is unavoidably felt upon withdrawing from circulation the war expenditure, and the other changes incident upon a transition from the state of war to the state of peace : that distress, too, resulting in great part from the fluctuation of fashions, from the extent to which machinery has been carried abroad as well as at home, from the blind avidity of our manufacturers and merchants, who have overlooked this fact, and glutted the market when they had no competitors, . . from the state of the continent, impoverished by a grinding tyranny and laid waste by repeated campaigns, . . and, lastly, from the state of the seasons, which is not more completely out of the control of Government than most of the other causes which have been indicated.

We have shewn also that as the constitution of Parliament has not been the cause of the existing distress, so no change in that constitution could

in the slightest possible degree alleviate that distress, or otherwise benefit the people. If every office, sinecure, and pension, which the boldest reformer has yet ventured to prescribe, were abolished, the whole saving would not be felt as a feather in the scale: and, as directly tending to exclude talents from the Government, and confine places of great trust to the aristocracy, such an abolition would be most injurious to the commonwealth. They who seek to lessen the influence of the crown, keep out of sight the increased power which has been given to public opinion by the publication of the parliamentary debates, and the prodigious activity of the press. The first of these circumstances alone has introduced a greater change into our government than has ever been brought about by statute; and on the whole, that change is so beneficial as to be worth more than the additional expense which it entails upon us during war. This momentous alteration gives, even in ordinary times, a preponderance to the popular branch of our constitution: but in these times, when the main force of the press is brought to bear like a battery against the Temple of our Laws; when the head of the government is systematically insulted for the purpose of bringing him into contempt and hatred; when the established religion is assailed with all the rancour of theological hatred by its old hereditary enemies, with all the fierceness of triumphant zeal by the new army of fanatics, and with all the arts of insidious infidelity by the Minute Philosophers of the age; when all our existing institutions are openly and

fiercely assaulted, and mechanics are breaking stocking-frames in some places, and assembling in others to deliberate upon mending the frame of the government, . . . what wise man, and what good one but must perceive that it is the power of the Democracy which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished?

Of all engines of mischief which were ever yet employed for the destruction of mankind, the press is the most formidable, when perverted in its uses, as it was by the Revolutionists in France, and is at this time by the Revolutionists in England. Look at the language which is held by these men concerning the late transactions, and see if falsehood and sedition were ever more audacious! 'Perhaps,' says the Examiner, 'there may be a plot somewhere. . . in some tap-room or other; like the plot of Despard, who was driven to frenzy by ill-treatment, and then conspired with a few bricklayers in a public-house, for which he was sent to the gallows, instead of the care of his friends!' 'We feel,' says this incendiary, 'for the bodily pains undergoing by Mr. Platt, and think his assassin (unless he was mad with starvation) a scoundrel; and some of the corruptionists, who in luxury and cold blood can *provoke* such excesses, *greater scoundrels!*' Scoundrel is not the most appropriate term for an assassin, whatever it may be for a man who can in this manner attempt to palliate insurrection, treason, and murder. Mr. Cobbett goes farther than this: with an effrontery peculiar to himself, notorious as it is that the rioters were led from Spafields by the man who harangued

them there, and that the tricolor flag which they followed was carried to Spafields to be hoisted there for their banner, . . he says, 'it is well known to every one in London, that the rioters had no connection whatever with the meeting in 'Spafields.' And though the existence of St. Paul's Church is not more certain than that an attempt was made to murder Mr. Platt, whose recovery is at this moment doubtful, this convicted libeller has the impudence to express a doubt of the fact, for the purpose of making his ignorant readers in the country disbelieve it. 'The rioters,' he says, 'consisting chiefly of starving sailors, though they had arms in their hands, did no violence to any body, except in the unlawful seizure of the arms, and in the wounding (if that really was so) of one man who attempted to stop them, and who laid hold of one of them!' Another of this firebrand's twopenny papers is before us, in which he says that the ministers, the noblesse, and the clergy of France wilfully made the revolution, in order to prevent the people from being fairly represented in a national council. 'It was *they* who produced the confusion; it was *they* who caused the massacres and guillotinings; it was *they* who destroyed the kingly government; it was *they* who brought the king to the block!' And in the same spirit which dictated this foul and infamous falsehood, he asks, 'was there any thing too violent, any thing too severe, to be inflicted on these men?' He says, that 'Robespierre, who was exceeded in cruelty only by some of the Bourbons, was proved to have been in league with the open enemies of

‘France.’ He asks ‘whether the Americans gained their independence by quietly sitting by the fire-side? Oh! no. . . these were all achieved by *action*, and amidst bustle and noise.’ He says, ‘the quiet fire-side gentry are the most callous and cruel, and therefore the most wicked part of the nation.’ Towards the close of this epistle he says, ‘I will venture my life that you do not stand in need of one more word to warm every drop of blood remaining in your bodies;’ . . . and a few lines lower he tells the journeymen and labourers, to whom this inflammatory paper is addressed, that he has neither room nor desire to appeal to their passions upon this occasion! With equal consistency this firebrand concludes a letter to the Birmingham printer whose house was attacked by the mob, by expressing ‘a sincere wish that no further violences may ever be committed on him;’ and prints in the title-page these words in large letters, that all who run may read: ‘A Letter addressed to Mr. Jabet of Birmingham, shewing that he richly merits the indignation of all the labouring people in the kingdom, and of his townsmen the people of Birmingham in particular.’

No city in the kingdom is at this time experiencing such difficulty and distress as Birmingham; for this obvious reason, that no other place received so much direct employment from government during the war. This great annual expenditure was suddenly withdrawn, and nearly a fifth part of the population are now receiving weekly relief; the masters being no longer able to employ the men, very many having been ruined

themselves. This is a deplorable state of things, but it has not been occasioned by any misconduct or impolicy; it is the plain unavoidable consequence of events over which no man or body of men could have any control. In such a case what is to be done? Any man who is not either a madman or a villain, must see that there is but one course, . . . to mitigate the evil by giving as much temporary relief as possible, till new means of subsistence can be provided, by opening new channels of employment. To this accordingly the inhabitants have applied themselves with a zealous liberality of which no example is to be found in other countries, and which perhaps has never been equalled in this. Every parish, every religious congregation of whatever description, has its Benevolent Society. There are subscriptions for providing soup, for blankets, for clothing, for coats, for the relief of the sick, for women in child-bed, for the wants of infancy. There are above an hundred guardians of the poor, who go through the town, which is divided into districts for their superintendence, and see where relief is wanted, and what relief, and that it be properly applied. It is scarcely too much to affirm, that beneficence was never more liberally, more generally, or more strenuously employed, than it is at this time in Birmingham, where all who have anything to spare from their own necessities, are doing whatever can be done by human and Christian charity for the relief of those who are in need. And it is to the journeymen and poor of *this town* at this time that Mr. Cobbett addresses *himself*, seeking to irritate and inflame them, by

the most seditious language, and the most calumnious falsehoods, and telling them that they are 'coaxed and threatened, with a *basin of carrion* 'soup' in one hand, and a *halter* in the other !'

Why is it that this convicted incendiary, and others of the same stamp, are permitted week after week to sow the seeds of rebellion, insulting the government, and defying the laws of the country ? The press may combat the press in ordinary times and upon ordinary topics, a measure of finance, for instance, or the common course of politics, or a point in theology. But in seasons of great agitation, or on those momentous subjects in which the peace and security of society, nay the very existence of social order itself is involved, it is absurd to suppose that the healing should come from the same weapon as the wound. They who read political journals, read for the most part to have their opinions flattered and strengthened, not to correct or enlighten them ; and the class of men for whom these pot-house epistles are written, read nothing else. The *Monthly Magazine* asserts that from 40 to 50,000 of the two-penny *Registers* are sold every week, and the editor thinks it his duty to assist the sale by recommending it to his 'liberal and enlightened readers !' The statement may probably be greatly exaggerated, . . . this being an old artifice ; . . . but if only a tenth of that number be circulated among the populace, for it is to the populace that this ferocious journal is addressed, the extent of the mischief is not to be calculated. Its ignorant readers receive it with entire faith : it serves them for law and for gospel, for their Creed and their

Ten Commandments. They talk by it, and swear by it; they are ready to live by it; and it will be well if some of these credulous and unhappy men are not deluded to die by it; . . they would not be the first victims of the incendiary press. We have laws to prevent the exposure of unwholesome meat in our markets, and the mixture of deleterious drugs in beer. We have laws also against poisoning the minds of the people, by exciting discontent and disaffection; . . why are not these laws rendered effectual and enforced as well as the former? Had the insolence of the French journalists been checked at the commencement of the Revolution, those journalists would not have brought their king to the guillotine, and have perished themselves among the innumerable victims of their folly, their falsehood, their extravagance, and their guilt. Men of this description, like other criminals, derive no lessons from experience. But it behoves the Government to do so, and to curb sedition in time; lest it should be called upon to crush rebellion and to punish treason. The prayer in the Litany will not deliver them from these things, unless they use the means which God and man have entrusted to them for delivering us and themselves.

How often have we heard that the voice of the people is the voice of God, from demagogues who were labouring to deceive the people, and who despised the wretched instruments of whom they made use! But it is the Devil whose name is Legion. *Vox Populi, vox Dei!* When or where has it been so? Was it in England during the riots in 1780? Has it been in France during

the last six-and-twenty years? Or was it in Spain when the people restored the Inquisition;..for it *was the people* who restored that accursed tribunal, spontaneously and tumultuously..*not* the government, which only ratified what the people had done; still less were they assisted by that 'base engine of our corrupt statesmen, the standing army,' by which is meant the soldiers who fought and conquered with Wellington, as some of the City Resolutioners have asserted with equal regard to truth, and to the honour of their country! ..What will not these men traduce? *Vox Populi, Vox Dei!* Was it so in the wilderness when the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us Gods which shall go before us? Was it so at Athens when Socrates and Phocion were sacrificed to the factious multitude? Or was it so at Jerusalem when they cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him? The position is not more tenable than the Right Divine, not less mischievous, and not less absurd. God is in the populace as he is in the hurricane, and the volcano, and the earthquake!

To the utmost of our power we have ever pleaded for those measures of true reform by which individuals are to be made wiser and better, and the prosperity of the state increased and established by the increase of an educated, industrious, moral, religious, and therefore a contented and happy population. Evils there are in this country, great and crying evils; and the greatest of all is the prevalence of that seditious spirit which is fed and fostered by the periodical press. It is the first duty of government to

check that spirit, which otherwise, whether it fail or succeed in its ultimate design of effecting a revolution (for this is the design of the demagogues, cloke it as they may), will infallibly bring about insurrection, if not rebellion in the attempt. Two measures are, in our judgement, imperatively required; . . first, that Lord Grenville's bill against seditious assemblies be revived; secondly, that the punishment for seditious libel be made such as shall prevent a repetition of the offence, . . that punishment should be exile from the country which the offender has endeavoured to disturb. The guilty apprehend these measures, and already inveigh against what they deserve and dread; the sound part of the people, they who desire to be continued in the peaceable possession of their property, and in the enjoyment of that constitution under which England has risen and flourished, require them from their rulers.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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